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# LIFE

OF

MADAME

DE

# LAFAYETTE

BY

Mme DE LASTEYRIE

HER DAUGHTER

PRECEDED BY THE LIFE

OF THE DUCHESSE D'AYEN

BY

Mme DE LAFAYETTE

HER DAUGHTER

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY LOUIS DE LASTEYRIE

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

The life of the Duchesse d'Ayen was written by Madame de Lafayette, her daughter, in the prison of Olmütz.

After her return to France, this Memoir was printed, though not published, for a few friends by the Duchesse de

Luynes, with this title : *Notice sur la vie de A. L. H. d'Aguesseau, Duchesse d'Ayen, par Madame de Lafayette, sa fille, imprimée par G. E. J. Montmorency Albert Luynes. An IX, Dampierre.*

This Memoir is now published for the first time from a copy corrected by Madame de Lafayette herself, and revised by Madame de Lasteyrie, her daughter.

It has been completed by an account of the death of the Duchesse d'Ayen and of her eldest daughter, the Vicomtesse de Noailles, by M. Carrichon, *ancien prêtre de l'Oratoire.*

towards virtue my mother's heart was naturally inclined, and to its practice she applied herself from her earliest childhood with [redacted]t rectitude which was her special characteristic; so much so that with an irresolute though superior mind, with a physical and moral inclination to be troubled and alarmed in all circumstances, this disquietude and anxiety could be traced to one sole cause superior to all others. To her could always be applied the words of Psalm CXIX : *My soul is continually in my hand, yet do I not forget thy law.* Such were, O Lord, the inward feelings of my mother's heart : Thou hadst bestowed them on her, Thou hast rewarded them, and that eternal righteousness which is no other than Thyself, now

fulfils all the desires of her heart, according to this promise of Jesus Christ: *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.*

From her earliest years, the integrity of her heart united with the sterling qualities of her mind to give an excellent foundation to her education. All her impressions were serious and true. A volume of « Les Pères du Désert » fell into her hands when she was scarcely more than five years old; instead of being amused by all the visions it contained, she was seized with a dread of having similar hallucinations if she became too great a saint, and upbraided herself for her pusillanimity. It can be seen by the letters written to her by her

grandfather, the Chancelier d'Aguesseau [1], how much, even at that age, her time was taken up by serious reading. Unfortunately I know but little about that period of her life; but what I do know proves that, even at that time, the love of God was her first thought, that, although she had been educated in a convent, there was nothing narrow in her devotion; but that a scrupulous adherence to her duties was the foundation of her faith. She was very fond of chess; but having remarked that it occupied her thoughts after the game was over, and that, when she played on Saturdays, she

1. See in the *Lettres inédites du Chancelier d'Aguesseau*, published by M. Rives, in 1823, his letters to his granddaughter Henriette written between 1743 and 1747.

was not so attentive to mass on the following day, she refused to play chess on Saturdays.

When she was fourteen, her father took her from the convent; she then lived under the paternal roof with Mme de Fresnes, her mother-in-law, to whom she became greatly attached; this feeling was reciprocal. Mlle Aufroy, her governess, who was a very superior person, became also her most tender and faithful friend.

While my mother was still in her father's house, between the time of her leaving the convent and the moment of her marriage, M. Dupré, her grandfather on her mother's side, died, leaving her a very considerable fortune. The only feeling caused her by

the possession of such great riches was that of dread; her sole wish was that the property should be charged with sufficient legacies to diminish its value. This was not a mere childish fancy, for during her whole life she always looked upon riches as a burden, and never thought that they could in any way increase our happiness on earth; with the scruples of a faithful disciple of the Gospel, she believed that she had not the right to dispose of them at her own pleasure, but only according to the will of Him who bestows the blessings of this world.

Few details have reached me concerning the four years she passed under her father's roof. All I know is that, while she was completing her education, and daily strengthening

herself in every christian virtue under the direction of the celebrated "curé" of Saint Paul, the secluded and serious life she was leading never impaired the natural liveliness of her spirits. I know little more regarding the period of her marriage with my father[1], who though two years younger than herself, inspired her with the most sincere and tender attachment.

After her marriage, my mother established herself at the Hôtel de Noailles where the children of our grandfather Adrien Maurice[2] were in the habit of gathering each year around him. Owing to the retired life of her mother-

1. Jean-Paul-François de Noailles, Duc d'Ayen, and later Duc de Noailles, born October 16, 1739, died in 1824. He married January 5, 1755.

2. The second Maréchal de Noailles, great grandfather to Mme de Lafayette, who died in 1760. His

in-law, she did not see much more of the world than before her marriage; it was only at the time of her presentation at court that she was taken to Versailles.

At the end of two years, she gave birth to her first child, who was a boy. It was above all for a mother's part that God had formed her; such is the opinion not only of her daughters who, from the depth of misery caused by her loss, will never cease to feel the blessed privilege of being her children, but also of all those who knew her. The fervour of her first maternal passion was greater than can be

son, third Maréchal of the name, had four children, the Duc d'Ayen, the Marquis de Noailles, the Comtesse de Tessé and the Duchesse de Lesparre.

imagined. She lost her son when he was only twelve months old. He died of an illness which lasted twenty-four hours. My mother's grief was in proportion with her love. Supported by Faith alone, by the prospect of her child's eternal bliss, she was so much absorbed by that thought, that she often found herself, as she told me later, believing that there was no greater saint in heaven.

A year after this loss, on the 11th of November 1758, my mother gave birth to a daughter (the Vicomtesse de Noailles[1]) she who, after having been her greatest comfort, ended this life with her and near her in a sacrifice, the horrors of which can only be

1. Louise de Noailles, Vicomtesse de Noailles, executed July 22, 1794.

equalled by the gentle courage of the victims.

The death of her son had so deeply afflicted my mother, that she was some time before realizing to all its extent her affection for her other child; but soon, Louise having fallen ill, she felt but too well the strength of her maternal love. I was born the following year[1]. In 1763, she had another daughter, Mme de Thésan, whose death was the first of our misfortunes. In 1766 and 1767, she gave birth to Pauline[2] and Rosalie[3].

It can easily be imagined that my

1. Adrienne de Noailles, Marquise de Lafayette.

2. Pauline de Noailles married to the Marquis de Montagu, died January, 1839. Her Memoirs have been published by her children.

3. Rosalie de Noailles, married to the Marquis de Grammont, died in 1852.

father, as well as all the family, wished to have a boy, but in my mother's presence he endeavoured to appear indifferent on the subject, and besides he was too anxious about her health for his mind to dwell on anything else. As for my mother, she would ardently have wished to have given him a son; but accustomed to refer every thing to higher considerations, she found in this dispensation of Providence greater facility for bringing up in the ways of the Lord the children he had bestowed on her, and derived from this thought abundant consolation. According to the example of the wives of the patriarchs, far from murmuring at the abundant increase of her family, she looked upon it as a blessing from heaven and the means of uniting her still closer to my

father; she therefore received each child with fresh thanksgivings. As a christian, her views were still more exalted. When her children were brought back to her after baptism, a new and different feeling would spring up in her bosom; it was with all the strength and fervour of her soul that she offered them up to God, and she found her reward in the inward hope that she might one day say like Jesus Christ: « *Of those thou hast given me I have lost none.* » We, her children, must look on this admirable disposition of my mother as the greatest blessing God has conferred on us.

My mother's feelings were too sincere, her resolutions too firm, for her actions not to be their exact consequence. You may therefore imagine

the care she took of us from our cradle; on us she lavished the tenderest affection of her heart, and she considered our education as her first and greatest duty. She had but one aim: to fulfil the will of God and accomplish his work. All her faculties were employed in working for our good and preparing our happiness; her vigilance, in keeping away all that could harm us; her penetration, in discerning our dispositions (from our earliest childhood she studied them so as to influence, educate and direct each of us in a manner appropriate to our different natures); the straightforwardness and force of her mind, in accustoming us from infancy to reason with sense and justness; her soft eloquence, strengthened by her example, in making

us acquainted with virtue, christian virtue, that is to say with the principles, the benefits and the rewards of virtue.

We were all brought up under my mother's eye, and intrusted to the care of her old nurse, who had learnt under Mme. d'Héricourt not only how to attach to her our infant hearts, but also how to make us take an interest in all that it was her duty to teach us.

For our amusement, she never had recourse to fairy tales, ghost stories or other absurdities. An anecdote from the Old Testament, an adventure of the little girls of the convent where she had been with my mother, a good action, true and simple, was told by her in a manner so appropriated to our childish tastes, that she used to

charm us while fulfilling the intentions of my mother who disliked those little falsehoods so much in use with children.

Each day we passed several hours with my mother; she was given an exact account of our daily employments. We repeated to her the lessons we had learnt, and the stories which had been told us. With that solid judgment which God had given her to such a high degree, she endeavoured to put truth to the level of our intelligence, and above all to make us capable of understanding it. She wished that all that we heard and saw should be in harmony. The principles, the moral, the history of facts, the examples, the way to profit by them, all was connected together in

her lessons, as in the decrees of Divine Providence, if I may so speak. From our infancy she taught us never to be guided by our fancies, but, in the accomplishment of our duties, and even in the amusements of our age, to feel pleasure at the thought that we were submitting to the will of God and acting under his sight.

There was nothing absolute in her way of teaching, correcting or guiding us; she thought she had done nothing, when she had not thoroughly convinced the child she was speaking to, and, though she was naturally indolent, and perhaps too little accustomed to repress the vivacity of her temper, she would listen to her children's reasonings with persevering kindness. Her aversion from charla-

tancy and pedantry gave her perhaps too great a dislike for order and method; this was sometimes a cause of loss of time. She also remarked that we were less obedient than most children of our age: « That may be, mamma, I would answer, because you allow us to argue and reason with you, but you shall see that at fifteen we shall be more obedient than other children. »

We began by learning the « Petit Catéchisme de Fleury », then the « Grand Catéchisme » by the same author, and at last the Gospel. The books we read were the « Ancien Testament abrégé de Mésengui », the « Magasin des Enfants », the « Éléments de Géographie », which we studied at the same time on the map, the « Histoire Ancienne de M. Rol-

lin », and in conversation we learnt several stories on mythology. My mother used to read to us, and make us read aloud the most celebrated pieces of poetry and the finest plays of Racine, Corneille and Voltaire. She made us dictate letters to her even before we knew how to write.

In 1768, my mother fell ill of the smallpox, and believing herself in danger, she could not bear the thought of leaving us so young without her. She communicated her cruel anxieties to a friend who answered : « Do you think yourself necessary to God? Has He no other means of saving your children? » This thought revived and strengthened her courage. In the midst of her illness she gave birth to a son. Notwithstanding this long wish-

ed for event; my father's joy was scarcely perceptible: all his thoughts were taken up by the anxious care my mother's state required. He deemed it necessary to deceive her on the nature of her illness, and, with a generosity we shall ever be thankful for, he satisfied the wish she expressed of seeing us, and allowed us to approach her bed-side, though I myself had never had the smallpox. My mother's recovery was long and her convalescence tedious, but she was rewarded for her sufferings by all she was told of my father's anxiety on her account.

It was only when all danger was over, that we were told what a misfortune had threatened us. The emotion we then felt is still present to my mind, but children can so little

realize the idea of death, that I remember with far deeper emotion the moment when, from the garden, we saw, for the first time my mother sitting at her bedroom window, disfigured as people are a fortnight after the smallpox. None of the misfortunes which have since befallen me have ever effaced the remembrance of our sorrow at the thought that we should never see my mother again as she had formerly been.

Her infant child, unconscious as yet of the love bestowed on it, was already the object of her maternal solicitude; and while our father and our grandparents were placing on him all their hopes, my mother, dreading the dangers which would later threaten his innocence, was offering him up unreser-

vedly to God. One day, on the Thursday of Passion week, she had been praying near the effigy of our Saviour's tomb; on her return, she said to Mlle Aufroy: « I have just killed my son, and I have some fears for my daughters. If one of my children falls ill, I shall be fearfully anxious. I have offered them up to God that He may give them back to me on the day of Eternity. I hope nevertheless He will leave me my daughters, but I think He has accepted my son, and that I shall soon lose him. » This impression was so deep in my mother's heart, that, during a lingering illness which ended by my brother's death, she had not an instant's hope. While holding him in her arms, during his last moments, she exclaimed from the depth

of her heart: « My dear child, you have won the prize of victory: nothing can now separate us in Eternity. » Such were the views which strengthened her courage in the midst of her grief.

This was my mother's last child. She had five daughters, the eldest of whom was then ten years old and the youngest three. She gave her two eldest daughters a governess, called Mlle Marin, whose talents and devoted attention won her confidence, and whose claims to our grateful and tender attachment have each day increased for the last twenty-seven years.

My mother intrusted Mlle Marin with part of our education, such as teaching us geography, grammar, examining, before she did, our historical

extracts, making us repeat what we had learnt by heart, the « Catéchisme de Montpellier » etc., or being present at the lessons of our different masters. But it was my mother who regulated all, who saw to all, who was the soul of all. She had reserved for herself the task of reading with us some of the finest poetical works, and passages selected from ancient and modern orators, as well as of forming our taste by pointing out the beauties of each author. But all her efforts tended to form our judgment on every new object which came across our way. Her mind and heart were alike upright, and the idea of regulating our life on the principles of virtue and duty, apart from all interested motives, became so habitual to us, owing not only to our mother's

lessons and her example, but also to that of our father on the too rare occasions in which we had the opportunity of seeing him, that the first instances which we met with of a contrary conduct in many of those who are commonly called honest people, caused us a painful impression of surprise which it required many years of contact with the world to diminish in our minds. It is true that my mother allowed us to read her inmost thoughts; she was incapable of dissimulation, although her strength of mind made her capable of discretion and prudence. Her confidence in us was well calculated to elevate our soul by showing us hers in all its purity.

She not only taught us to imitate what was admirable in her, she also en-

deavoured to give us what she thought was deficient in herself. She would tell us of circumstances in which she had been mistaken, discuss with us the causes and consequences of her small errors, and we could thus see the faults which can be committed with a right judgment and a single heart. We used to dine with her every day and, when we came to the age of nine or ten, we accompanied her now and then for a few days to the country, to the Maréchal de Noailles', at Saint-Germain, to M. d'Aguesseau's, her father, at Fresnes, and to M. de Saron's, her brother in law, at Saron. These journeys always gave us great pleasure; but they were short: my mother did not like being separated from those of her children who could

not accompany her, and it was on account of them she made the sacrifice of never living in the country where, besides our other pleasures, we had the happiness of seeing her gayer and more satisfied than in Paris.

Always anxious to turn everything to our advantage, she would never neglect urging us to make remarks on the things and persons we had seen: she thereby observed the progress of our judgment, and was enabled to redress it when she found it erring.

And here let me remark that, owing to the fertility of her imagination, the secluded life she was leading gave her more subjects of reflection than worldly dissipations give to many who live on a wider scene. Though generally benevolent, her judgment was

sometimes severe. She was rarely satisfied on every point with the people she had to deal with, for she always expected to find in others the qualities she herself possessed. Sometimes she had painful disappointments, but her character was ever void of malice. The sight of evil always afflicted her, sometimes filled her with indignation, but never with bitterness; the sight of good would transport her with joy, and she would listen with delight to the account of a meritorious action. Her natural qualities bore the stamp of christian virtue, and, like Charity itself, *she did not rejoice in injustice but rejoiced in truth.*

My younger sisters did not see my mother at the same hours as we did,

and notwithstanding the number of her children, each received the kind of care and moral education which best suited her character. As for me, I can say that she always brought back within the bounds of reason my over-excited imagination; and though I must confess that my mother allowed me, when I was a child, to perceive her approbation too well, nevertheless she knew how to correct my pride by exposing my faults in a manner so true and energetic that she would each time strike my heart in its inmost core.

I am coming to a moment when the solicitude of her maternal love became more anxious than ever. It was time to prepare us for our first communion, and my mother had already

to listen to proposals of marriage for her daughters. She considered the dispositions with which we should approach the holy sacrament as decisive of our eternal happiness. The difficulty of judging of a child's state of mind, the irresolution of her own character, the extreme delicacy of her conscience, might have inclined her to defer this solemn moment. One would think that a person of her disposition would have calmed her anxieties and put an end to her irresolutions by following the advice of some respectable clergyman. But my mother was too deeply impressed with all her duties ever to have thought of such means of escaping from them. She was a mother; she could, she even ought and in fact she wished to profit by good and enligh-

tened advice; but it was her duty, on all occasions, where her children were concerned, to take every decision herself, for it was to her and to no one else that God had intrusted them. The moment of approaching the sacrament is truly solemn; but she felt more than any one the value of that great blessing, and she believed that she had not the right to prevent her children from receiving it, if once she could be sure that they were sufficiently prepared. She therefore turned all her efforts towards helping them and examining them with care.

The « Catéchisme du concile de Trente » the « Exposition de la doctrine » by Mésengui, besides the « Catéchisme de Montpellier » which we learnt by heart, were the texts of

the lessons given to us by my mother and Mlle Marin, from eleven till thirteen years of age. It was in 1771 that my sister and myself received the sacrament of confirmation; my sister made her first communion that same year; mine was deferred not only that year but also the following one, and in the midst of the anxieties I caused my mother by my troubled brain and the unfit state of mind I was in, never was she more compassionate and indulgent or more active in her tender care. I shall not enter into any details; I feel what I owe to her solicitude better than I could express it.

Other cares also occupied my mother's mind during these years. It was at that time that she first received proposals of marriage for her two el-

dest daughters. Although these proposals were rather premature, my mother, long before they had been made, every time the thought of having to give us to another crossed her mind, was unable to conquer the anguish of her heart. But she never allowed herself to be guided by first impressions and by worldly considerations alone. In such circumstances she would throw herself into the arms of God and await his will with patient courage. Then contradictions and trials would give her neither ill humour nor impatience, although she was rather too subject to such movements in the small incidents of ordinary life. I have heard her say on this subject that we knew so little ourselves the consequences of certain events decisive of the remainder of our

life, that all we had to do in such circumstances, was to put aside, as much as possible, every prejudice, to be guided by the rules of duty and of reason, never to attach ourselves exclusively to any idea in particular, and after having taken every precaution that prudence may dictate, to abide without murmuring by the will of God who knows far better than we do what can best suit us. It was with this belief that she listened to the first proposals of marriage for her daughters.

We were scarcely twelve years old when M. de Lafayette was proposed to her for one of us; he himself was only fourteen. His extreme youth, no parents to guide him, having lost all his near relations and having no one in whom he could repose confidence, a

large fortune already in his possession, which my mother looked upon as a dangerous gift, all these considerations made her at first refuse him, notwithstanding the good opinion she had acquired of his personal qualities. She persisted several months in her refusal; but my father was not discouraged, and as one of his friends observed to him that my mother had gone too far ever to change her mind, he did justice to her straightforwardness in the midst of his anger against her. « You do not know Mme d'Ayen, he said however far she may have gone, you will see that she will give way like a child if you prove to her that she is in the wrong; but on the other hand she will never yield if she does not see her mistake. » Ac-

cordingly, when she was told that her daughter would not leave her during the first years of her marriage, and that it would only be celebrated at the end of two years, several measures having been taken to finish M. de Lafayette's education, she accepted him whom she cherished ever after as the most tenderly beloved son, whom she valued from the first moment she became acquainted with him, and who alone could have sustained the strength of my heart after having lost her. This consent brought on a reconciliation with my father. My sister and I had witnessed the misunderstanding between our parents, but we were in ignorance of its cause which my father would have ever kept from my knowledge, but which was afterwards told me

by my mother who was convinced that I could only feel grateful towards those who had prepared my happiness with such unworldly views.

During that time the Vicomte de Noailles had been proposed to my parents for my sister and accepted by them [1]. All the good that was said of him both by his tutor and by those who had followed up his education, and the advantages which his connections would offer to his young wife, reassured my mother. The two marriages were therefore decided, on condition that nothing would be said to my sister before a year and to me

1. The Vicomte de Noailles, member of the Constituent Assembly, died in 1804, in the campaign of San Domingo. He was second son to the Maréchal de Mouchy, the head of the younger branch of the Noailles family.

before eighteen months. It was settled that M. de Noailles and M. de Lafayette should meet us sometimes either at home or out walking, but my mother wished that our minds should not be distracted that year from our education, as we were going to be married so young. It was towards the close of the summer of 1773 that my mother spoke to my sister of the Vicomte de Noailles. Louise was much pleased as from her earliest infancy she had always liked and appreciated her cousin.

During the two months which elapsed between this moment and her marriage, my mother helped her to prepare herself for her new state in a righteous and godly spirit. It would be impossible to give you an idea of her feelings on the day she led her first

child to the altar. Nothing could be more touching than the union and confidence which existed between the two families which in reality formed but one. But Louise was about to leave the paternal roof; my younger sisters cried bitterly, and tears were shed by those who received as well as by those who were losing so precious a charge. It was thus my mother parted with her first daughter; but her tenderness did not forsake her, and though my sister was often at Versailles with her mother-in-law, my mother found frequent means of seeing her; and my father's "quartier" which came round soon after, brought them again together [1]. It was at that time that I was

1. The Duc d'Ayen was "Capitaine des Gardes

spoken to of M. de Lafayette [1] towards whom I was already attracted by feelings forerunners of that deep and tender affection which every day has united us more and more in the midst of all the vicissitudes of this life, in the midst of the blessings and misfortunes which have filled it for the last twenty-four years.

With what pleasure I learnt that, for more than a year, my mother had looked upon him and loved him as a son! She told me all the good she had heard with regard to him, all she thought of him herself, and I saw that

du Corps." He was obliged to reside three months every year near the King's person.

1. Marie-Paul-Joseph-Roch-Yves-Gilbert de Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, born September 6, 1757, married April 11, 1774 to Adrienne de Noailles, died May 20, 1834.

he already felt for her that filial affection which was to be the blessing of my life. She tried to calm down my poor weak brain which was over-excited by the importance of the coming event. She taught me to pray, she prayed herself for the blessings of Heaven on my future condition. As I had the happiness of remaining with her, my only feelings were those of deep emotion.

I was then fourteen and a half; and it was with renewed efforts that my mother sought to prepare my sister and myself for the new duties we had to fulfil. Our trust in her, the confidence she reposed in us, gave her the means of doing so. It was not that sort of confidence which mothers seek to win from their children, and which I

believe they seldom obtain, that confidence which a companion of one's own age can alone inspire; it was an intimate and unlimited confidence which arises from the anxious wish to be directed and approved of by one's mother, which would make one think with dread of an action, a visit, a conversation, however innocent, almost of a thought which would be kept secret from her; that confidence which brings one always back towards a support, towards a guide on whose experience, on whose love one may rely, a guide of whose decisions one may disapprove, whose blame one may incur, but who still is necessary and from whom it would be impossible to conceal one's conduct. Such were my feelings towards my mother.

M. de Lafayette returned from his regiment in the month of September. He was then inoculated; my mother shut herself up with us both at Chaillot, where we had hired a house for the occasion. She did her best to amuse him, and, during this tedious time, she devoted herself to him with the most vigilant affection.

The following winter, to comply with my father's wishes, she took me every week to the Queen's ball. She would afterwards invite to supper all the friends of her sons-in-law, the most intimate even to dinner, and she did the honors with such natural and sincere *bienveillance*, that all were charmed with her manners. You may fancy that this worldly life was not to my mother's taste; but she had only de-

cided on leading it after mature reflection, and her first, I may say her only motives were to avoid deeply offending my father, and to make their home pleasanter for her daughters' husbands. As she was constantly faithful to the rule she had prescribed to herself, as well as to us, of never appearing in places of amusement when she thought that she could stay at home, she felt confident that God would bless her efforts to keep her daughters in the paths of religion and to protect them from the dangers of a worldly life. Like the mother of Moses, who, finding no other hiding-place, stood by the river near which she had laid her son, she hoped in God, and awaited his help.

The time of my father's "quartier"

being over, my mother returned to her homely life, and gave herself up with fresh ardour to occupations better suited to her nature. Her first concern, my mind having become more composed, was to complete my religious education. I made my first communion at sixteen years of age, and the same year, 1775, on the 15th of December, I gave birth to a daughter, the first of her grand-children who received my mother's blessing.

The year 1777 brought with it fresh trials which were borne by my mother with her usual fortitude, always supported by the grace of God, always guided by her enlightened tenderness, superior to those petty foibles which are so often a source of illusion, and weaken a mother's judgment. M. de

Lafayette executed in April the scheme he had been forming for six months past of going to serve the cause of independence in America. I loved him tenderly. On hearing the news of his departure, my father and all the family fell into a state of violent anger. My mother, dreading these emotions for me on account of the state of health I was in, alarmed at the dangers her dearly beloved son had gone to seek so far, having herself, less than any body in the world, the thirst of ambition and of worldly glory or a taste for enterprise, appreciated nevertheless M. de Lafayette's conduct as it was appreciated two years later by the rest of the world. Totally casting aside all care with regard to the immense expense of such

an enterprise, she found, from the first moment, in the manner in which it had been prepared, a motive for distinguishing it from what is termed *une folie de jeune homme*. His sorrow on leaving his wife and those who were dear to him, convinced her that she need not fear for the happiness of my life save in proportion to her fears for his. It was she who gave me the cruel news of his departure and, with that generous tenderness which was peculiar to her, she tried to comfort me by finding the means of serving M. de Lafayette.

At that time, my mother's youngest sister married M. de Ségur[1], one of M. de Lafayette's friends. My mother

1. The Comte de Ségur, "de l'Académie française" and "Pair de France," died in 1830.

devoted to her all the moments she could dispose of, but I was still the continual object of her solicitude. She saw how much good she did me by showing me her affection for M. de Lafayette. Whenever M. de Lafayette's touching letters reached us, I could see how thoroughly she believed in his tenderness for me. My sister too joined with my mother in her loving care. Nothing was neglected to make me feel these consolations. My health also made it a duty for me to be calm. I gave myself up entirely to my mother's care, and at the end of two months I gave birth to my dear Anastasie[1]. It seemed as if I already foresaw what a gift God was bestowing

1. Anastasie de Lafayette, married in 1798 the Comte Charles de Latour-Maubourg, died in 1863.

on me : from the first moment of her birth I felt, that in the midst of the greatest trials, I was still capable of joy. My child received her grandmother's blessing, and was carried by her to the baptismal font.

The first news from M. de Lafayette arrived on the first of August, one month after Anastasie's birth. The comfort it gave me was fully shared. My mother was indefatigable in her efforts to obtain some accounts of him, to send him news from us, and to make herself useful to him at two thousand leagues distance. The few details which reached us respecting his arrival, and the favourable impression he had made on the public mind in America, did not surprise my mother, but renewed her courage and

made her still more thankful to Providence who was so visibly protecting and guiding him. But shortly afterwards we heard that M. de Lafayette had been wounded at the battle of the Brandywine. I need not say what were my mother's feelings on hearing such intelligence. She succeeded in keeping from me the report of his death which was spread about at that time, and to prevent false news from reaching my ear, she first took me to her father's place in Burgundy, and then sent my sister and me on a visit to the Comtesse Auguste de la Marck, at Raismes[1].

During the winter of 1778, my mother turned all her efforts towards

1. Marie Françoise de Cernay, married the Comte de La Marck, Mirabeau's friend.

obtaining intelligence from America. We heard occasionally from M. de Lafayette. The alliance between France and the United States caused my mother great satisfaction; I had never seen her take such interest in any political event. In the spring, my sister, having to go to Bordeaux on a visit to her husband's relations, my mother wished me to accompany her, hoping that the change of scene might prove a diversion for me. She took charge of Anastasie, whom I left behind, and this was the first time she was separated from her daughters.

Our journey was most prosperous, and shortly after our return, my sister gave birth to a little girl.

In the course of the following winter, 1779, M. du Roure was men-

tioned to my parents for their third daughter. This proposal entered into my mother's views. M. du Roure's person was pleasing, he had been brought up with every possible care by a virtuous mother, whom he had never left and whom he loved and venerated. This marriage was almost settled, when M. de Lafayette returned from America on the 12th of February 1779, at a moment when he was least expected. It was my mother who prepared me for this happy meeting. I shall not attempt to describe to you the way in which she shared my joy, nor what she felt herself on seeing M. de Lafayette's character and conduct appreciated by the world as she herself had appreciated them from the beginning, on seeing his actions

in accordance with her expectations, and his wife happy after so many trials.

Owing to the war which still lasted, several expeditions were sent out that same year. M. de Noailles was ordered to the West Indies with his regiment. His wife was in despair at this separation; my mother shared in her daughter's feelings with her usual tenderness, and helped her to support her trials with the aid of religious consolations. A projected descent on England in which M. de Lafayette and my father were to take a part, a severe and rather long illness I had about that time, were for my mother fresh subjects of anxiety. At the end of the year, when all the family had gathered together, the marriage of her

third daughter with M. du Roure took place. On the 23 th of December, I gave birth to my son George [1].

M. du Roure's complete indifference for his wife, and my sister's weak state of health were causes of great disappointment to my mother. She did her best to bring about her daughter's happiness, exhorting her to try to please her husband, and exerting herself to make her house agreeable to M. du Roure; but all was useless.

Notwithstanding these various troubles, nothing was neglected. My son was sent to Versailles; I was not yet in a fit state to travel, and to the care she bestowed on him, unknown to me, I probably owe George's life.

1. George-Washington de Lafayette, born December 23, 1779, died December 1849.

M. de Lafayette's second departure for America was a source of fresh grief both to her and to me. M. de Noailles, who had returned to France several weeks before this departure, started a few months after with M. de Rochambeau for North America, and it was with inexhaustible kindness that my mother sought each day to relieve new sorrows.

However she was never distracted by these anxieties from the accomplishment of her duties, and in the midst of all her troubles we could often repeat to her: *Thou shalt rejoice in thy children, for the Lord will bless them all.* Pauline's first communion was one of those consoling events.

That same year, 1780, my mother met with a great misfortune: she lost

Mme de Saron, her sister, whom she dearly loved, and who died after several months of a lingering illness. Mme de Saron was a person of great virtue, and faith supported my mother in this loss which otherwise would have been still harder to bear, though Providence, it would seem, had permitted that all her affections, except her love for us, should be troubled by some circumstance relative to its object. Thus my father, whose attachment to her showed itself whenever he had any cause of anxiety on her account, and whose confidence in her, founded on mutual esteem, was visible in every important circumstance, was not fond of his home. Perhaps, in their early youth, my mother had allowed him to see too well the supe-

riority of her mind, perhaps, and this was what she would sometimes reproach herself with, had she too much neglected *les moyens de plaire*. At all events, it is certain that, in the details of every day life, she did not sufficiently triumph over the natural indecision of her character, and that my father, always suspecting that she was actuated by religious scruples, found less pleasure in her company than would have been necessary both for her happiness and for ours. Then she had lost her mother-in-law, Mme de Fresnes, to whom she had been so dearly attached, and her father had married again for the third time. Mme de Saron, whose mind was far inferior to her's, was however in communion with her by the elevation of

her feelings and of her principles, but she was loved by her husband in a manner so passionate and so easily alarmed, that she could not give way to her feelings with her sister. This constraint, which had become habitual for more than twenty years, made the last separation perhaps a little less cruel, but took away none of its bitterness.

While speaking of those whom my mother loved, I cannot forget to mention her sister-in-law, Mme de Lesparre, whose friendship was one of the most precious gifts God had bestowed on her in this world. Every anxiety, every tribulation was calmed when my mother had passed some time with Mme de Lesparre. Her strength, her courage would revive when she had

listened to the advice of that sweet, noble and high-minded creature.

It is with feelings of the deepest and most tender gratitude that I think of the happy influence she exercised over my mother's mind. Her death was the first of my misfortunes and no doubt the beginning of her reward. I shall not attempt to tell you what she was for us all, nor speak of her love and of her kindness. I only want to gratify a wish of my heart and do homage to her memory.

My mother was also deeply attached to Mme de Tessé. Each was worthy of her sister's affection, and they never ceased to love and appreciate each other. But the separate societies they had lived in, and above all the difference of their religious opinions,

had excluded that last degree of intimacy which alone can give to friendship all its charm and all its usefulness.

Her brother's character was not such as to be of much resource to my mother. She was fondly attached to her sister, Mme de Ségur, but, besides the difference of age, Mme de Ségur's passionate love for her husband prevented an intimate and frequent intercourse. It was therefore with us, and with us alone, that my mother found the comfort of that entire confidence which relieved her heart. It was for us that she lived and, in calling to your mind the different events of our life, it is the history of her life that I shall write.

Fresh subjects of grief marked the beginning of 1781. My sister lost her

little girl, while her husband was still in the United States. My mother was much affected by this death, but her daughter and she both found comfort and support in the consolations of religion.

Soon afterwards, it was my turn to become the object of her tender sympathy. George fell dangerously ill. My mother passed many nights with me near his bed-side. She strengthened my courage, and while she had such touching condescendence for my weakness, I blushed at feeling how much my faith was inferior to hers. My child recovered, and cruel anxieties on his father's account succeeded to those I had suffered on his. During the campaign of Virginia, M. de Lafayette was unable to correspond

with us, and the newspapers described his situation as almost desperate. I succeeded in keeping the most alarming circumstances from my mother's knowledge, as she had, in 1777, concealed her fears from me, but I could only spare her part of my anxieties. It was on her return from a visit to her father, in Burgundy, with three of my sisters, that we received the news of the surrender of Yorktown and of the capture of Lord Cornwallis and of his army, prepared by this campaign of Virginia which had been conducted in so remarkable a manner. Its happy conclusion is one of those wonderful events for which we must be grateful to Him who alone gives talent and success.

M. de Lafayette and M. de Noailles

had escaped, for this campaign at least, from the dangers of war. Every body repeated that its glorious termination was M. de Lafayette's work; he had prepared all in the midst of nearly unconquerable difficulties, and, what was still more gratifying, we learnt that, notwithstanding the entreaties which had been made to him, he had relinquished the glory of terminating all himself and had awaited the arrival of MM. Washington and Rochambeau, in order that the success should be more certain, and should be obtained at the cost of less bloodshed.

My mother's joy was equal to ours. We offered up with her our prayers of thanksgiving, and when we knelt together, I felt that they were less unworthy of God and of the blessings he

had bestowed on us. M. de Lafayette and my brother-in-law returned on the 21st of January and found us in Paris.

But it was not the will of God that my mother's tranquillity should be of long duration. In the spring, our brother-in-law du Roure was taken ill with the smallpox and died after a few days' suffering. Although his extreme coldness for his wife was a cause of grief to us all, it was impossible not to be attached to a young man who possessed so many amiable and estimable qualities, and not to sympathize with a mother who had lost so tender and affectionate a son. My poor little sister's grief was true and sincere as herself. Her health having been much shaken by this sudden blow, my father

and mother brought her home to live under their roof.

Shortly afterwards, I gave birth to my little Virginie[1].

Several marriages had already been proposed for Pauline. My father perfectly agreed with my mother in not setting on the advantages of fortune greater value than they deserved. Several proposals had been refused, when M. de Montagu's name was mentioned[2]. Besides the worldly advantages to be found in this marriage, so much good was said of M. de Montagu's personal qualities, that my parents decided on accepting him. He was

1. Marie-Antoinette-Virginie de Lafayette, born September, 1782, married the Marquis de Lasteyrie in 1803, died July 23, 1849.

2. The Marquis de Montagu married May 12, 1783, died in 1834.

then with the army in Spain. The peace which was signed in the course of the following winter brought him back, as well as M. de Lafayette, who was to set off again on a great expedition with M d'Estaing; this gave my mother fresh anxieties to share with me.

In the month of May, Pauline married M. de Montagu.

It was towards that time that I left my father's house; we established ourselves in a home of our own[1], and my mother was left with the young widow, Mme du Roure, and Rosalie, her youngest daughter. Two years had elapsed since Rosalie had made her first communion. She was of a somewhat vio-

1. Rue de Bourbon, now rue de Lille.

lent nature, and her superior mind did not prevent her being rather too headstrong and obstinate. My mother saw these faults; but she was grateful to Almighty God for the admirable qualities she could already discern in our dear sister and which made her foresee that firmness of character which we have beheld each day increasing with her trials.

My eldest sister, who was always my mother's greatest comfort in the midst of all her tribulations and anxieties, gave birth, shortly after Pauline's marriage, to her dear Alexis[1].

In the month of August, M. de Lafayette and I paid our first visit to Cha-

1. The Comte Alexis de Noailles, member of the Chamber of Deputies, died in 1835.

vaniac[1], and my mother, always attentive to each of our wants, allowed Mme du Roure to accompany us. This journey was beneficial both to her health and spirits.

M. d'Aguesseau, my mother's father, had, for two years past, been the continual object of her anxieties and of her care; he had been sinking gradually, and died that year, at the age of eighty-two.

Having paid a just tribute of regret to her father's memory, and fulfilled with her usual delicacy, all that heart and duty could prescribe, my mother allowed me to persuade her to accompany us back to Chavaniac.

1. Chavaniac (Haute-Loire), M. de Lafayette's birth-place.

There, besides the feeling of peaceful enjoyment with which she always viewed the beauties of nature, she had also the pleasure of finding herself in her daughter's home, in M. de Lafayette's birth place, near his aunt[1], whose feelings were in harmony with hers, and surrounded by my children whom she seemed in this place to love and cherish with still more tenderness than usual. As for me, my mother's presence, and the share she took in all my joys, seemed to double their value.

My children loved her dearly, and her kindness filled their heart. All who came to see us went away repeating her praise. Rosalie also had

1. Mme de Chavaniac, sister to M. de Lafayette's father. She had married her cousin.

great success; never had I seen her more pleasing than during her stay at Chavaniac. My mother remarked this with joy, for no circumstance, either pleasant or painful, ever escaped her observation when her children were concerned. M. de Lafayette alone was missing; he had gone to the United States to fulfil an engagement which he had taken at the end of the war.

My mother returned by Lyons to Paris where she arrived in time for the birth of Alfred [1] who, like his brother, was chosen by Providence amongst her grand children to be near her, with his angelic mother, during the last precious moments of her life.

1. The Vicomte Alfred de Noailles, married Léontine de Noailles, great-grand-daughter to the Maréchal de Mouchy. He died in the *retraite de Russie*.

I remained at Chavaniac much longer than my mother in order to accompany my aunt back to Paris.

Towards the close of that year, 1784, in accordance with my mother's wishes, Mme du Roure married M. de Thésan.

For some time past several proposals had been made for Rosalie. She was nineteen; her age as well as her reason made her capable of judging what was best for herself at this decisive moment of her life. She believed that the only way of ensuring her future happiness was to try to know and follow the will of God. « I do not think, she said, that true happiness is to be found in this world, but it is wrong to impose upon one's self duties which one does not feel it in one's power to accomplish without murmuring. » At

last God allowed, or rather ordained that M. de Grammont[1] should be preferred, M. de Grammont in whom my mother reposed such loving confidence, who became the consolation of his wife, and who took so large a share in all our misfortunes.

During the winter of 1788, Rosalie was betrothed to M. de Grammont. The marriage took place during the following autumn.

After a journey to the Pyrénées, necessitated by Mme de Montagu's health, my mother joined the family which had been increased since 1787 by the birth of little Jenny[2] who is all that remains

1. The Marquis de Grammont, member of the Chamber of Deputies for the department of Haute-Saône, died in 1841.

2. Jeanne de Thésan, married the Comte Henri de Mérode, died at Brussels in 1862.

to us now of our sister, Mme de Thésan.

During the spring, I suffered from a pain in the chest, and I became a fresh subject of anxiety for my mother. It was as much to please her as to follow the doctor's advice, that I went, in the month of June, to Chavaniac and Bagnols. I prolonged my stay in Auvergne till the end of the year on account of the "Assemblée provinciale," and on the 15th of December I joined my mother and the whole family in Paris.

Before relating that succession of misfortunes which began by the loss of one of her daughters, I should wish to say a few words more of my mother's character, and give you an insight into the sanctuary of her

heart which her confident kindness so often laid open before us, and in which we gathered such precious knowledge. The uniformity of her principles, the rectitude of her views can easily be discerned in her conduct and her actions; these qualities appear sufficiently in the account of her life. But I owe to truth, I owe to the remembrance of the thankful gratitude with which she always traced back the gifts of God to their Divine Author, to say that it was by having frequent recourse to the sacraments that she found strength and courage. So deeply did she feel the value of the presence of Jesus-Christ, that when some disquietude of mind kept her from the holy table, she was still more alarmed at being deprived of the sacrament than

at the cause of that privation. In my early youth, I saw her receive the sacrament every month, then every fortnight, then later again every Sunday, and sometimes twice a week. She had a fervent love for public worship; she would feed with delight on certain passages of the Psalms, and used to say to us, in the outpourings of her heart, how deeply she felt the truth of these words of David (Psalm LXXXIV): *A day in thy courts is better than a thousand.* There was nothing narrow in her devotion, and her piety was free from all minute observances. She would discover every side of the smallest question, and find a thousand reasons for and against each thing; her deep and lofty mind, leaving beneath it every prejudice, was subject to such lively im-

pressions that all the strength of her character was necessary to prevent them from impairing her judgment. These qualities excluded any thing peremptory in her wishes or her conduct, and seem to me to have been the cause of those continual perplexities which were the bane of her life. Though her entire confidence in God's mercy prevented her from fearing death, still her existence was marred by those disquietudes.

I have now to speak of the manner in which she behaved towards her inferiors. The necessity of being watchful in household matters was most repugnant to her character, but she did her best to fulfil that duty. She was always endeavouring to be of use to her servants, either by giving

them good books, or serious and salutary lessons. When she thought she could impress some solid truth on their mind, her ardent charity would inflame itself for them; she would act almost a mother's part, and would apply herself to their improvement with unexampled zeal and steadiness. When they were ill, she would take as much care of them as of her own children. If some fault obliged her to dismiss any of the servants, she would keep her reasons secret, as she would have done for her best friend, and preferred appearing harsh, prejudiced or inconsiderate, to casting the smallest blame on any of her domestics. We ourselves were not informed of anything that could be turned to their discredit. They all revered her,

although they sometimes complained of that impatience which she had too much allowed to degenerate into habit. A taste for perfection in all things, a certain restlessness of mind, a natural indolence which prevented her from preparing herself beforehand for what she did not think herself obliged to foresee, an aversion from pedantry, which gave her too great a dislike for method, such were, I believe, the causes of a fault which never prevented any of those who surrounded her from feeling the effects of her benevolence or from revering in her the most admirable virtues. A maid, who accompanied her to the last, now mourns for her as for a mother, and Lemesle, her old *valet de chambre*, became almost mad with grief, after having lost her.

As for her charity to the poor, I have already said that she never looked upon herself but as the trustee of the fortune Providence had bestowed on her. On this point her scruples were very great, and with those noble feelings which made her set no value on worldly goods, she never indulged in a fancy or undertook a journey for her pleasure, and would have considered any needless expense as a theft of the poor's inheritance. I must add that her love for justice, and her charitable feelings made her alternately find deep consolations and occasions for harassing solicitude in the abundant alms she spread around her. Those she gave on her estates were distributed with admirable intelligence and discernment. Whatever her maternal

love dictated to her with regard to her children was the standard of her conduct towards the poor, especially towards the young and the sick. We see positively by a clause of her will, that she regarded in particular charity towards little children and the care to be given to their education as a mode of thanksgiving for the blessings of God on her own family.

But I feel how incapable I am of giving you a just idea of my mother's virtues, and I shall resume the history of that life, each moment of which was filled with her maternal solicitude.

At that time, 1788, notwithstanding the anxieties inseparable from the happiness of being surrounded by so nu-

merous a family, that family itself was for her a source of great happiness. Her youngest daughter, who had been a year married, and who still lived with my mother, combined the deepest and most reciprocal affection for her husband, with such a conformity of principles, of feelings, of taste for retirement, that one might have hoped for my mother and for her the happiest and most peaceful life that can be led on earth. The more she knew M. de Grammont, the more she loved him, and considered the lot of being his wife as the greatest blessing God could have bestowed on her.

Mme de Montagu, my mother's fourth daughter, was dearly cherished by the family into which she had en-

tered. Her duties prevented her from being always with my mother, but this was less painful owing to the reciprocal attachment which existed between her husband and herself. But the days she spent with my mother, and they were many, were days of rejoicing.

Her third daughter, Mme de Thésan, was passionately loved by the most estimable husband. She was the mother of a charming little girl, and this had been for a long time the object of her most earnest wishes.

My mother's second daughter, whose troubles had given her so much cause for anxiety, was almost as happy a mother as she was a happy wife, and her children began already to give promise of those qualities which my mother admired so much in their father; they

seemed already to feel the happiness of being her grand-children. Finally Mme de Noailles, her eldest daughter, notwithstanding the deep and affectionate feeling which attached her to her husband, lived continually with my mother, to whose agitated mind she brought that calm and repose which it so much required.

In the month of August 1788, a first and cruel loss put an end to our happiness. Mme de Thésan fell ill. I had the painful task of first telling my mother of the danger my poor sister was in. Though she was well prepared for death, we proposed to send for a confessor; she accepted with joy, saw that no hope was left, submitted patiently to the will of God, and shortly afterwards became insensible. We

sent for abbé Edgeworth[1]; he found her unconscious. She received absolution, and two hours afterwards breathed her last. My mother, uniting her sorrow with that of the four children which were left her, gave the example of a courage equal to her maternal love. She never recovered from the effects of this dire misfortune, and for the rest of her life, she always remembered, with heartrending grief, that one was missing from her dear flock.

My father was away, and M. de Thésan was with his regiment. But M. de Noailles, M. de Lafayette and M. de Grammont were there to share in our

1. Louis XVI's confessor, who visited him at the "Temple" and who attended him to the foot of the scaffold.

sorrow, and did all that lay in their power to sooth my mother's grief.

Towards the end of that year, the disturbances which had agitated France announced the approaching convocation of the States General. My mother was far from dreading any change which could entail the loss of fortune, or in which vanity alone might be concer ned. I have often heard her rejoice at the suppression of several rights, the exercise of which weighed on her as a responsibility. But she had a great horror for any excess, an extreme aversion from every sort of commotion or disturbance, and she dreaded the outburst of political passion. She also foresaw that M. de Lafayette, of whom she was so fond, was about to act a prominent part, and she was

filled with terror at the first symptoms of the Revolution.

Towards the middle of January 1789, she fell dangerously ill of an inflammation on the lungs. Our anxiety is not to be told. The sixth day of her illness, she received all the sacraments. The priest who brought them to her said: *He who comes to-day to visit you, is He in whom you have so often found your support.* But, however great were the consolations he had come to administer, the excellent man had barely the strength to speak, so overpowering was his emotion on witnessing our despair. As for my mother, the sight of her children, far from weakening her courage, seemed to strengthen it; her heart bled only at the thought that one was missing. The slightest atten-

tion, the smallest care, given to her by one of us, brought solace to her heart, and she has since told us that she should have liked at that moment to have given us all her blessing and died. As for us, we were unable to receive any comfort, even from the tender manner in which our anxieties were shared by those who loved us, and by Mme de Lesparre in particular. At last, on the seventh day, the illness took a favourable turn, and we then saw, with tears of gratitude and emotion, how much our mother was beloved. M. de Noailles took a most active and sincere part in his wife's anxieties; M. de Lafayette's filial feelings of deep and tender attachment to my mother made him suffer on his own account. Poor M. de Thésan was

heart-broken, and if M. de Montagu's thoughts wandered a moment from the sick-bed, it was on account of his own fears at the sight of my sister's despair. M. de Grammont was on a visit to his relations in Burgundy, and only returned to share in our first joys, and in the care required by my mother's convalescence, during which the state of her chest gave us fresh cause for anxiety. Mme de Tessé was charming; she had devoted all the powers of her mind and of her heart to my mother and to us. My father also shared in our cares. Mme de Ségur was deeply affected. Of all the people of the house, of all those who served my mother, there was not one who did not give proofs of the most touching anxiety and of the most sincere attachment. All the inhabitants

of the *quartier*, especially the poor, came each day to inquire about my mother, and partook first of our anxieties, then of our joy.

We tasted for a few months the full extent of our happiness, and my mother was kind enough to share in it with real joyfulness. The storms of the Revolution soon succeeded each other, and my mother, who had already foreseen part of them with dread, and who began to witness with anxieties of every kind the share M. de Lafayette was taking in them, judged him however in every detail of his conduct, with all the enlightened fondness of her heart. She saw him always on the brink of the precipice, but always worthy of love and esteem. She was with us at Versailles during the

various events which preceded and followed the 14th of July. Her two eldest daughters and Mme de Grammont were with her. Pauline was at Luchon. My mother had the kindness to keep my children under her care till the middle of October, either at Versailles or in Paris.

I shall say nothing here of all the events of those times: I shall only speak of my mother. Her antipathy was extreme for every thing that was contrary to order, and for all great popular disturbances. Nevertheless, in the midst of them, she only sought for truth and justice, and her feelings were never embittered by those prejudices which she beheld with indignation blinding the judgment of so many people. She shared in all that could in-

terest us with that indulgent fondness which was however indulgent with equity. Thus she made me pass sweet moments, in the midst of all our troubles, by the many touching proofs she gave me of her affection for M. de Lafayette.

The birth of one of Mme de Grammont's children, the misfortune which befell Mme de Montagu, who lost her third little girl, and lastly the birth of our dear Euphémie[1], were the family events which turned her mind from political affairs.

The winter of 1791 was an anxious time for my mother, especially on my account. In the midst of the public commotion occasioned by the civil

1. Euphémie de Noailles, Marquise de Vérac.

constitution of the clergy, I endeavoured sometimes to serve the cause of religion. The sincerity with which M. de Lafayette served the cause of liberty, afforded me opportunities of doing so, and my mother, notwithstanding her extreme dislike to business, had such a wish to do good, that I persuaded her to meet several pious persons who could help us in our attempts by acting in concert with us. In this circumstance, as on all occasions when she had anything important to negotiate, she investigated every question in a manner worthy of the firmness of her mind, and of the rectitude of her heart. She found too often in those with whom she had to deal, such narrowness of mind, such infirmity of purpose, that

she generally came back displeased from second conversations even when she had been encouraged by the first, and had admired the excellence of those with whom she had conversed.

The King's acceptance of the Constitution put an end to these cares. It was the time of M. de Lafayette's retirement from public business. The rapturous joy which I felt at this event was amply shared in by my mother, and she decided on coming to Chavaniac, to enjoy with us the first pleasures of private life. On her way she stopped at Plauzat to see Mme de Montagu. It was there that our dear Pauline tasted for the last time the joys of filial tenderness, the sole passion of her heart: she thus responded to her mother whose maternal love surpassed all her

other affections. This separation was heart rending, for Pauline's departure for England was then almost decided, but both were far from foreseeing that they were not to meet again before the day of Eternity.

It was on the 4th of November that my mother arrived at Chavaniac, and we had the happiness of keeping her till the month of December. M. de Lafayette, who felt so deeply the blessing of having such a mother, my aunt, my children, the inhabitants of Chavaniac, who witnessed this happy meeting, would be better able than I am to relate what my withered heart would vainly attempt to depict. In truth, she was happier than I was at the sight of my own happiness. M. de Lafayette, unchanged after three years past in the

midst of the storms of public life, still preserved the same charming simplicity of manner, the same fondness for his aunt and for the place of his birth, happy at the sight of his children, happy to see himself beloved by two mothers whose feelings he requited so well. The arrival of my son, which took place soon after, completed his sisters' happiness. My mother participated in her grandchildren's joy, and poured forth her thanksgivings in the presence of God. She was edified by the true piety which she witnessed in the village, and shared these enjoyments with my aunt, whose society so greatly enhanced them all. She was however grieved at seeing how painfully slow was my moral convalescence after so many anxieties and emotions.

You can easily imagine how I valued her presence. The moment of parting with her was always a painful one, but this time I hoped soon to see her again, and that separation, which was to be the last, took place without any violent struggle. At the price of how many years of my life would I since have bought the blessing of one hour's meeting, were it even to have had her afterwards torn from my bosom!

From this time forward, I can only speak of my mother from what I have been able to gather from letters and from the account of strangers [1]. Perhaps I shall some day be able to collect

1. See at the end of the *Life of the Duchesse d'Ayen* the narrative of her death by the abbé Carrichon.

a greater number of precious details than I have yet assembled together before shutting myself up in this prison[1]. I shall now only give you those which I have found in my mother's precious correspondence, and which I have gathered from the conversation of two or three persons who are for me such just objects of envy.

My mother had scarcely arrived in Paris, when Mme de Lesparre fell ill, and expired at the end of three days. She died the death of the just, so calm that it seems the beginning of their reward. After a whole life of tribulations and of continual sacrifice to her duties, she was ripe for Eternity. God wished to spare her the horrors of

1 The fortress of Olmütz in Moravia.

the two following years, and the misfortune of surviving her father which was the one she dreaded above all. The room of this holy woman, her death bed were a sanctuary. Mass was said in her house on the night of her death, and those whom she was about to leave sought in the holy sacrifice for the strength they required to bare their own. My mother was losing her dearest friend, and the daily comfort of her life.

My fears caused by the approaching war were anxiously shared, though at a distance, by those I loved. M. de Lafayette came from the army to pass a few days in Paris. My mother's letters were full of the pleasure with which she saw him again still the same as at Chavaniac. His stay was short,

for the declaration of war soon called him back to the army.

The events of the 20th of June took place soon after. My mother saw with deep gratitude the generous conduct of my father who arrived from Switzerland, where he had been for his health, to share in the dangers of those he loved.

The letter written by M. de Lafayette to denounce the Jacobins, his bold speech at the bar of the Assembly, and his courageous attitude on that occasion, were for her one of those deep consolations, the recollection of which supported her, I am fully convinced, in the midst of all her misfortunes. This was the last time she saw M. de Lafayette. My sister was in Paris with my mother, and it was

almost *un dédommagement du malheur* not to have been there myself.

Shortly afterwards, owing to the disturbances caused by the neighbourhood of the Tuileries, the Assembly and the Jacobins, my mother left the Hôtel de Noailles[1], and on the 10th of August she was living with Mme de Grammont in a small house in the Faubourg Saint-Germain. She past the whole morning of that horrible day trembling for my father who was at the Tuileries, and longer still for M. de Grammont, who was searched for amongst the dead.

I was not forgotten in the midst of all these events. My mother and my

1. The Hôtel de Noailles was situated in the rue Saint-Honoré, on the spot now occupied by the rue d'Alger.

sister, whose thoughts were ever with those they loved, even in the midst of their personal dangers, wrote to me as often as formerly; their letters always comforted me and relieved my heart.

Several days afterwards, my mother was summoned to the « Hôtel de Ville » with my father, in order to give an account of their motives for having quitted their ordinary residence: their answers satisfied the authorities, and they were allowed to return to the Hôtel de Noailles.

At that time, M. de Lafayette became for them the object of the most cruel anxieties, and I have since been told that nothing could equal their anguish during the three days which preceded his departure from France.

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It was still my angelic sister who gave me the account of this departure, and I could see by her letters, although she was obliged to express herself in guarded terms, that in the midst of the dangers which surrounded her, the thought of M. de Lafayette's safety was the first in her heart.

My mother and my sister were not able to leave Paris before the 2nd of September. We may easily imagine what they must have suffered during that horrible day and those which followed. As soon as the gates of Paris were opened, Rosalie and her husband [1] left town to return to their department; my sister, Mme de Noailles, accompanied my mother to Poissy

1. M. and Mme de Grammont.

where they passed some time with Mme d'Aguesseau. They had chosen Poissy on account of the neighbourhood of Saint-Germain where my grandfather dared not yet assemble his family around him; he was alone with my father who passed his time between Saint-Germain and Poissy.

My mother was hardly safe out of Paris, when she received the news of my arrest at Le Puy. She wrote to M. Roland, minister for the Home Department, who answered her by a letter full of falsehoods, assuring her however that he wished me no harm; this proved true. They sent me one of my sister's servants who witnessed my return to Chavaniac, and was able to reassure them on my account.

Until the end of that year, my mo-

ther remained unmolested in her quiet abode where she was the object of my father's tender solicitude. M. de Lafayette was in his prison in Germany, I in mine at Chavaniac [1], when M. Morris, the minister of the United States in Paris, said he could undertake to forward a letter from me to the King of Prussia. My mother and my sister sent me M. Beauchet who brought my letter back to Paris. My mother expressed to me her approbation of what I was writing to Berlin with feelings so truly maternal for M. de Lafayette and for myself, that I shall always remember with joy the moment I received her letter.

1. See the *Life de Mme de Lafayette* by Mme de Lasteyrie.

The death of the King, the admirable courage and piety he displayed, and all the circumstances which preceded and accompanied that dreadful crime, made a deep and fearful impression on my mother's mind. Shortly afterwards, as my grandfather wished to have her near him, she established herself at Saint-Germain with her children.

During the winter of 1793 and the following spring, my mother and my sister went frequently to Paris. It was there they sought to obtain whatever information it was possible to gather with respect to M. de Lafayette's fate. They pointed out to me several ways of communicating with him, received young M. de Custine's advice on the means of serving him, informed me of

the zeal displayed by M. Pinkney [1] and Mme d'Hénin [2], in short he was the object of their most constant thoughts in the midst of their personal dangers. They saw M. de Lafayette's valet who had escaped from prison, and sent him to me, though unfortunately we could not learn much from him.

But what they sought for above all in Paris, were the consolations of religion. Let us adore the will of God and the means he employs for the sanctification of his elect. Let us not even murmur at the thought that the motives which were constantly attracting them to Paris, contributed to prevent them from leaving that spot so

1. Minister of the United States in London.
2. N. de Mauconseil, Princesse d'Hénin.

full of danger for them, but where the faithful never ceased to find the comforts of religion.

M. de Noailles entreated my sister to go and join him in England, but she could not bear the thoughts of forsaking my mother, and leaving behind those she loved exposed to perils in which she herself could have no share; she therefore sacrificed herself to our mother, to her children and to me, and, alleging the necessity of looking after her fortune, she remained in France : I have been told that my mother thought for some time of leaving the country, but I do not exactly know at what moment.

She was always ready to serve me by every possible means, and in a cir-

cumstance where it was of the greatest importance for me that my husband's affairs, or rather the affairs of our creditors should be transacted in the department of Haute-Loire, notwithstanding her repugnance to take such a step, she went herself to see the minister Garat, and spoke to him with that natural loftiness of mind which made her eloquent.

In the month of April 1793, my father not being able to obtain satisfactory certificates of residence, was obliged to leave his family and return to Switzerland. My mother was deeply affected by this separation. Shortly after she hoped to come and see me at Chavaniac with my sister. They had succeeded in obtaining their passports, and though it was impossible for me

to rejoice at any thing in a moment when my only wish was to leave France, you may easily imagine what I felt at the prospect of embracing them again. But our common hope was not of long duration; my grandfather, the Maréchal de Noailles, fell ill, and the weak state he was reduced to required constant attendance.

In the month of May, we received M. de Lafayette's first letters; they revived my mother's spirits, for in the midst of her many trials, she always felt peculiar delight in finding how unchanged, through all the variations of fortune, was he whom she so dearly loved.

The summer past painfully away; our anxieties on my grandfather's account increased each day until the

end of August, when, after having spit blood during twenty-four hours, he was delivered from his sufferings still more rapidly than had been expected.

Wholly wrapt in their grief and in the care my grandmother required, my mother and my sister returned to Paris, and established themselves there notwithstanding my repeated entreaties.

The fatal decree of the 17th of September 1793 was published soon after their return. The news of my father's escape from France reached them about that time, and, although my mother was far from seeing the danger as great as it really was, yet it was a true relief for them to feel that my father was in safety.

My mother and my sister were put

under arrest in the first days of October, but allowed to remain well guarded at the Hôtel de Noailles. This did not seem by their letters to alarm them much.

They continued to correspond with me, and their only thought was to reassure me not only with regard to the peril of their situation, but also as to the painful details of their captivity. They were allowed to receive a few friends, Mme de Menou, Mme de Saron's daughter, came often to see them. They sometimes also had their doctor, M. Lobinhes, to dinner; but their greatest comfort, and most constant occupation was the care and attention required by my sister's three children. M. Grellet, these dear children's tutor, whom we looked upon

as their eldest brother, was for these two mothers a consolation and a support according to their heart. He felt the price of this happy lot, and acted accordingly with that devotedness, so far superior to the greatest courage, which would have cost us his life, had he not been saved as by a miracle in the midst of the most fearful perils, and had the Lord not hearkened to the prayers of the victims who were about to be sacrificed. It was to his devoted and intelligent activity that they owed the visits of the courageous abbé Carrichon, who during this first period of their captivity, brought them, at the risk of his own life, all the consolations of religion. Jesus-Christ himself, by his presence, comforted them, strengthened them, and prepared them for their sa-

crifice.... Owing to the caution which was required at that time in corresponding, I knew nothing of these details by their letters.

A month later, I myself was taken as a prisoner to Brioude, and it became still more difficult to correspond. However I shall give you the few details which I have been able to collect. Alfred was ill for some time, and remained in a sickly state. Alexis and Euphémie were thriving, and all three were each day, if possible, more tenderly beloved. Their life was calm; my mother alone was much agitated owing to her natural restlessness of mind. My grandmother required their constant care, and this continual exercise of all their duties brought peace and quiet to their soul.

Those who have known my mother cannot doubt that in the midst of all these sufferings she still found infinite pleasure in watching over her grandchildren's education, in engraving in their hearts those principles which support us all, in viewing the supernatural effects of those principles on the fondest of her daughters, and in blessing that divine mercy on which she reposed all her hopes for the future welfare of her children and grandchildren.

Persecutions went on increasing. One day the *détenus* had to answer questions on their actions and on their thoughts. My mother and my sister were prepared, and answered those who questioned them with their usual tact and straightforwardness.

This time the interrogators were polite, and no harm ensued.

The inventory of all that was in their possession was drawn up. My mother, fearing she might be made to swear that she had concealed nothing, had hung to her side, in the shape of a watch chain, all the diamonds which were left her. They were not taken; she sold them that same day to a jeweller who gave her immediately the money she required to pay the small debts which were owing, but she never received the full amount of what was due to her, the jeweller having been beheaded on the following day. Nothing in the world was now left them, save some few *chiffons* of my sister's, which were sold, and what belonged to M. Grellet who had given

the mall he possessed, and from whom it was a pleasure to receive. This extreme poverty, and all its consequences are hardly worth mentioning in the midst of so many other and greater trials.

Each day brought some new misfortune, or some fresh disaster. My father's men of business had all been arrested; the *régisseur* of Tingry perished by order of Joseph Lebon. It was soon the turn of the members of the "Parlement," and M. de Saron, my mother's brother-in-law, was executed on Easter Sunday, 1794.

For some time past, even women had not been spared. Yet my mother and my sister were far from thinking that their personal safety was menaced; their heart was however prepared,

and they had already asked M. Carrichon if he would have the courage to accompany them to the foot of the scaffold. At last, in the month of May, they were ordered to quit the Hôtel de Noailles; they had hired another abode. Some steps which they took with respect to their furniture reminded the authorities of their existence; and, after having been led through Paris from prison door to prison door, they were at last conducted, with the Maréchale de Noailles, to the Luxembourg. I know that on arriving there my mother's courage did not fail her, that she was much calmer than she had been for a long time past, although the separation from the children had been heart rending.

I know that, shortly afterwards,

M. Grellet, who, in spite of a thousand obstacles, had kept up a correspondence with them, made them aware of what they had to fear, and that the last sacrifice was accomplished by a voluntary acceptance before having been so by the cruelty of the murderers. I know that a holy priest, who was in the same prison, sustained their courage with admirable fervour. I know that the care my grandmother required occupied them incessantly, and that my mother, in the midst of all her moral and physical sufferings, was still sometimes troubled by that restlessness of mind which was part of her character. Notwithstanding all the misfortunes which were falling on her at once, she forgot none of those who were dear to her. She recommended

Mlle Aufroy in her letters, and exhorted, with every possible detail, that maid, who remained so faithful to the last, to take care of her health.

It was M. Grellet who broke to her the news of my arrival in the prisons of Paris; she cruelly felt this fresh misfortune, and succeeded in sending me prudent advice.

At last, after having seen falling around her nearly all the victims who had been heaped into the same prison, as well as those who were dearest to her, she was summoned, with her mother-in-law and her daughter, to the Conciergerie, that is to say to death. So deep-rooted was in her the habit of forgetting herself and thinking only of others, and so calm did her soul remain at that fearful moment, that

she took every precaution to keep this horrible intelligence from Mme d'Orléans[1], with whom my sister happened to be when she came to fetch her away.

This would be the place to give you all the details which I have been able to gather concerning that angelic creature whose lot it was to support my mother, and return to her, at that last moment, all the love and the care she had received from her; but I shall speak of my sister in another writing. All I can do for the present is to call back to mind what I have been able to learn about my mother.

1. The Duchesse d'Orléans, mother to King Louis-Philippe. She was grand-daughter to the Comte de Toulouse who had married the sister of the second Maréchal de Noailles, the Duc d'Ayen's grand-father.

She arrived at the Conciergerie worn out with fatigue. M. Grellet had repaired to a *café* next to the *guichet,* and succeeded in exchanging a few words with my sister, but it was only in spirit that he received my mother's blessing.

Deprived of every thing, they had barely sufficient money to obtain a glass of current water. The persons who shared their cell prepared a single miserable bed for the three prisoners. My mother was dejected, and could not yet believe that so great a crime was possible. She stretched herself on the pallet, and entreated my sister to lie down by her side. Louise obeyed for a few moments. The next morning, my mother, somewhat reposed, saw more clearly the doom which

awaited her, showed great courage, spoke tenderly of her grandchildren, and begged of the prisoners who were present to take charge of her watch for them : *It is the last thing I can send them*, she said. She took some chocolate with Mmes de Boufflers[1] and was afterwards summoned to the horrible judgment. I have been told that my sister, whilst dressing my mother, seemed still to taste happiness in attending upon her. She was heard to say : *Courage, mama, we have only one hour more !* (*Courage, maman, il n'y a plus qu'une heure !*)

M. Grellet, who the day before had been confined in a cell for three hours on account of the interest he

1. Relations of M. de Lafayette

had evinced for the prisoners, having been released as by a miracle, repaired to M. Carrichon. This good priest, as well as M. Brun, obtained from Heaven strength enough to follow the prisoners on the way from the Conciergerie to the scaffold; there, my sister recognised M. Carrichon, and, with a presence of mind sublime at such moment, she pointed him out to my mother who appeared agitated, but who collected all her courage, and received fresh strength by the grace of absolution. From that moment till the last, her thoughts were no longer on earth, and during the three quarters of an hour she had to wait at the foot of the scaffold, she did not cease to pray with fervour and resignation. MM. Brun and Carrichon re-

mained till all was over, and they returned home with the feelings of the centurion returning from the foot of the cross. He who was sacrificed for us, and who allowed their dispositions to be like unto His, will permit us to apply to this death what was said of the sacrifice of the cross which sanctified theirs: it was there that we were born a second time.

This is the consolation which is left us, and which is our support. I feel that the thought of following in footsteps so dear would have taken from the horror of so awful an end.

*Je renonce à rien exprimer, parce que ce que je sens est inexprimable.*

# ON THE DEATH
OF
# THE DUCHESSE D'AYEN.

## I

*Notes taken from an account given by "la citoyenne" Lavet prisoner at the Conciergerie at the same time as Mmes de Noailles.*

I was told, on leaving prison, that there was a *dame* Lavet who had been at the Conciergerie in the same cell as Mmes

de Noailles and d'Ayen. I repaired to her immediately in order to gather from her the details of their short and horrible stay in that prison. She gave them to me as follows :

NOAILLES,
Duchesse de Duras[1].

The *citoyennes* Noailles (the *ci-devant* Maréchale de Noailles, the Duchesse d'Ayen, the Vicomtesse de Noailles) arrived on the 21st of July 1794 at the Conciergerie, extremely fatigued by their removal from the Luxembourg which had been effected in very rough carriages. They greatly needed some nourishment, but

1. The Duchesse de Duras, daughter to the Marechal de Mouchy, was sister to the Vicomte de Noailles. She has left a narrative entitled : *Journal des prisons de mon père, de ma mère et des miennes.*

it was impossible to give them any, because it was nine o'clock in the evening, and the regulations did not allow of any thing being introduced into the prison after dark. They were however given some current water to allay their thirst. They were put into a cell with three other women, one of whom knew Mme de Lafayette by name; this circumstance interested her in favour of Mme de Lafayette's relations. She tried to procure beds for them; but the turnkeys absolutely refused to give them any, on making the discovery that the prisoners had not in their possession the sum of forty-five francs which they wanted to extort from them. They had been divested of every thing at the Luxembourg. The Vicomtesse de Noailles had only

fifty sous in her pocket. Mme Lavet, deeply impressed with the misfortunes of that unhappy family, gave her bed to the Maréchale de Noailles. She prepared a sort of pallet for Mme d'Ayen and her daughter. Mme de Noailles refused to lie down, saying that she had too short a time to live for it to be worth while to take that trouble. Her mother past part of the night in trying to persuade her to do so. "Think, she said, of what we shall have to go through to-morrow. — Ah ! mama, my sister answered, what need have we to rest on the eve of Eternity? "

She asked for a prayer-book and a light by which she was enabled to read. She prayed during the whole night. She interrupted herself occasionally to attend to her grandmother

who slept for several hours at different intervals, and who, each time she woke, would read and read over her *acte d'accusation*, repeating to herself: "No, I cannot be condemned for a conspiracy which I have never heard of; I shall defend my cause before the judges in such a manner that they will be obliged to acquit me." She thought of her dress, and feared that it might be tumbled; she settled her cap, and could not believe that, for her, that day was to be the last. Mme d'Ayen had fears, but she did not see the extent of the danger. She dozed for a few minutes. The wish of sending to her grandchildren her watch, the only thing which was left her, caused her much agitation. She begged of her companions to take

charge of it. They dared not. The Vicomtesse de Noailles entreated them to send to her children an empty pocket-book, a portrait and some hair. The same answer was made : she was told that such a mission would endanger the persons who inhabited the room. She asked Mme Lavet to send word to M. Grellet that she died with great peace of mind and perfect resignation, but that she regretted him as well as her children with all the tenderness of her heart. The name of her beloved sister, Mme de Lafayette, was pronounced in that fearful abode. She imposed silence, for fear of putting her in danger. She made no attempt to seak for repose. Her eyes remained opened to contemplate that heaven into which she was about to

enter. Her face reflected the serenity of her soul. The idea of immortality supported her courage. Never was so much calm witnessed in such a place. But she would forget every thing to be of use to her mother and grandmother.

At six o'clock in the morning, Mmes de Boufflers brought them some chocolate. These ladies remained a moment with them, and then bade them an eternal farewell.

Nine o'clock struck. The *huissiers* carried off their victims; tears were shed by those who had only known them for twelve hours. The mothers made some arrangements for the event of an acquittal. The daughter, who did not doubt of the doom which awaited them, thanked Mme Lavet

with that charming manner which was in her a gift of nature, expressed all her gratitude for her kind attentions, and added : *Votre figure est heureuse, vous ne périrez pas.*

## II

*Narrative of the death of Mmes d'Ayen and de Noailles by M. Carrichon, priest of the congregation of the Oratory.*

he Maréchale de Noailles[1], the Duchesse d'Ayen, her daughter-in-law, and the Vicomtesse de Noailles, her granddaughter, were detained prisoners in their own house from November 1793,

1. She was by birth a Cossé-Brissac. Her advanced age had impaired her faculties.

till April 1794. The first I only knew by sight, but was well acquainted with the two others, whom I generally visited once a week. Terror and crime were increasing together; victims were becoming more numerous. One day, as the ladies were exhorting each other to prepare for death, I said to them, as by foresight: *If you go to the scaffold, and if God gives me strength to do so, I shall accompany you.* They took me at my word, and eagerly exclaimed: *Will you promise to do so?* For one moment I hesitated: *Yes, I replied, and so that you may easily recognise me, I shall wear a dark blue coat and a red waistcoat.* Since then they often reminded me of my promise.

In the month of April 1794, during

Easter week, they were all three conveyed to the Luxembourg. I had frequent accounts of them through M. Grellet[1], whose delicate attentions and zealous services were of such use both to them and to their children. I was often reminded of my promise. On the 27th of June, on a Monday or a Friday, he came to beg of me to fulfil the engagement I had taken with the Maréchal de Mouchy and his wife.

I went to the "Palais de Justice" and succeeded in entering the court. I stood very near with my eyes fixed upon them during a quarter of an hour. M. and Mme de Mouchy, whom I had only seen once at their own house, and whom I knew better

1. Tutor to Alexis and Alfred de Noailles, sons of the Vicomtesse de Noailles.

than they knew me, could not distinguish me in the crowd. God inspired me and with His help I did all I could for them. The Maréchal was singularly edifying and prayed aloud with all his heart. The day before, on leaving the Luxembourg, he had said to those who had given him marks of sympathy: *At seventeen years of age I mounted the breach for my King; at seventy-seven I ascend the scaffold for my God; my friends I am not to be pitied.* I avoid details which would become interminable. That day I thought it useless to go as far as the guillotine; besides my courage failed me. This was ominous for the fulfilment of the promise I had made to their relations who were thrown into the deepest affliction by this catastro-

phe. They had all been confined in the same prison, and had thus been of great comfort to each other.

I could say much about the numerous and dismal processions which preceded or followed that of the 27th and which were happy or miserable according to the state of mind of those who composed them, sad they always were even when every exterior sign denoted resignation and promised a christian death, but truly heart rending when the doomed victims had none of these feelings, and seemed about to pass from the sufferings of this world to those of the next.

On the 22nd of July (1794) on a Tuesday[1], between eight and ten o'clock

1. 4 Thermidor.

in the morning, I was just going out. I heard a knock. I opened the door, and saw the Noailles children with their tutor. The children were cheerful as is usually the case at that age, but under their merriment was concealed a sadness of heart caused by their recent losses and by their fears for the future; the tutor looked sad, careworn, pale, and haggard : *Let us go to your study*, he said, *and leave the children in this room*. We did so. He threw himself on a chair. *All is over, my friend*, he said, *the ladies are before the Revolutionary Tribunal. I summon you to keep your word, I shall take the boys to Vincennes to see little Euphémie*[1]. *While in the wood, I shall*

1. Their sister, Mme de Vérac.

*prepare these unfortunate children for their terrible loss.*

Although I had long been prepared for this news, I was greatly shocked. The frightful situation of the parents, of the children, of their worthy tutor, that youthful mirth so soon to be followed by such misery, poor little Euphémie, then only four years old, all these thoughts rushed upon my mind. But I soon recovered myself, and after a few questions and answers full of mournful details, I said to M. Grellet: *You must go now, and I must change my dress. What a task I have before me! Pray that God may give me strength to accomplish it.* We rose, and found the children innocently amusing themselves, looking gay and happy. The sight of them, the thought of their unconsciousness of

what they were so soon to learn, and of the interview which would follow with their little sister, rendered the contrast more striking and almost broke my heart. Left alone after their departure, I felt terrified and exhausted. *My God have pity on them and on me*, I exclaimed! I changed my clothes and went to two or three places. With a heavy load on my heart, I turned my steps towards the "Palais de Justice", between one and two o'clock in the afternoon. I tried to get in, but found it impossible. I made inquiries of a person who had just left the tribunal. I still doubted the truth of the news which had been told me. But the answer destroyed all illusion and all hope; I could doubt no longer. Once more, I went on my way and turned my steps

towards the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. What thoughts, what agitation, what secret terrors distracted my poor brain! I opened my heart to a friend whom I could trust and who, speaking to me in God's name, strengthened my courage. At his house I took some coffee which seemed to relieve my head.

Thoughtful and irresolute, I slowly retraced my steps towards "the Palais de Justice", dreading to get there, and hoping not to find those whom I was seeking. I arrived before five o'clock. There were no signs of departure. Sick at heart, I ascended the steps of the "Sainte Chapelle", then I walked into the *grande salle*, and wandered about. I sat down, I rose again, but spoke to no one. From time to time, I cast a melancholy glance towards the court yard, to see

if there were any signs of departure. My constant thought was that in two hours, perhaps in one, they would be no more. I cannot say how overwhelmed I was by that idea, which has affected me through life on all such occasions, and they have only been too frequent. While a prey to these mournful feelings, never did an hour appear to me so long or so short as the one which elapsed between five and six o'clock on that day. Conflicting thoughts were incessantly crossing my mind, which made me suddenly pass from the illusions of vain hope, to fears alas! too well founded. At last I saw, by a movement in the crowd, that the prison door was on the point of being opened. I went down and placed myself near the outer gate, as for the

previous fortnight it had become impossible to enter the prison yard. The first cart was filled with prisoners, and came towards me. It was occupied by eight ladies whose demeanour was most edifying. Of these, seven were unknown to me. The last, who was very near me, was the Maréchale de Noailles. A transient ray of hope crossed my mind when I saw that her daughter-in-law and her grand-daughter were not with her, but alas! they were in the second cart.

Mme de Noailles was in white; she did not appear more than twenty-four years of age; Mme d'Ayen, who looked about forty, wore a dress striped blue and white. Six men got in after them. I was pleased to see the respectful distance at which the two first

placed themselves so as to leave more liberty to the ladies. They were scarcely seated, when the mother became the object of that tender solicitude for which her daughter was well known.

I heard it said near me: *Look at that young one, how anxious she seems! see how she is speaking to the other one!* For my part I felt as if I heard all they were saying. *Mama, he is not there. — Look again. — Nothing escapes me; I assure you, mama, he is not there.*

They had evidently forgotten that I had sent them word that it would be impossible for me to gain admittance into the prison yard. The first cart stopped before me during at least a quarter of an hour. It moved on; the second followed. I approached the ladies,

they did not see me. I went again into the "Palais de Justice" and then a long way round, and stood at the entrance of the "Pont-au-Change", in a prominent place. Mme de Noailles cast her eyes around her; she passed, and did not see me. I followed the carts over the bridge, and thus kept near the ladies, though separated from them by the crowd. Mme de Noailles, still looking for me, did not perceive me. Mme d'Ayen's anxiety became visible on her countenance. Her daughter watched the crowd with increasing attention, but in vain. I felt tempted to turn back. Have I not done all that I could, I inwardly exclaimed? Everywhere the crowd will be greater; it is useless to go any further. I was on the point of giving up the attempt. Sud-

denly the sky became overclouded, thunder was heard in the distance; I made a fresh effort. A short cut brought me, before the arrival of the carts, to the rue Saint-Antoine nearly opposite the too famous "Force." At that moment the storm broke forth. The wind blew violently; flashes of lightening, and claps of thunder followed in rapid succession; the rain poured down in torrents. I took shelter at a shop door. The spot is always present to my memory, and I have never passed by it since without emotion. In one moment the street was cleared: the crowd had taken refuge in the shops and gateways. There was less order in the procession, both the escort and the carts having quickened their pace. They were close to the

"Petit Saint-Antoine," and I was still undecided. The first cart passed. By a precipitate and involuntary movement, I quitted the shop door, rushed towards the second cart, and found myself close to the ladies. Mme de Noailles perceived me, and smiling, seemed to say: *There you are at last! How happy we are to see you! How we have looked for you! Mama there he is!* Mme d'Ayen appeared to revive. As for myself all irresolution vanished from my mind. By the grace of God I felt possessed of extraordinary courage. Soaked with rain and perspiration, I continued to walk by them. On the steps of the church of Saint-Louis, I met a friend who, filled with respect and attachment for the ladies, was endeavouring to give them the

same assistance. His countenance, his attitude, shewed what he felt. I placed my hand on his shoulder and shuddering said : *Good evening, my dear friend.*

The storm was at its height. The wind blew tempestuously, and greatly annoyed the ladies in the first cart, more especially the Maréchale de Noailles. With her hands tied behind her, with no support for her back, she tottered on the wretched plank upon which she was placed. Her large cap fell back and exposed to view some grey hairs. Immediately, a number of people, who were gathered there notwithstanding the rain, having recognised her, she became the sole object of their attention. They added by their insults to the sufferings she was endu-

ring so patiently. *There she is that Maréchale who used to go about with so many attendants, driving in such fine coaches; there she is in the cart, just like the others!* The shouts continued, the sky became darker, the rain fell heavier still. We were close to the *carrefour* preceding the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. I went forward, examined the spot, and said to myself: This is the place for granting them what they so much long for.

The cart was going slower. I turned towards the ladies, and made a sign which Mme de Noailles understood perfectly. *Mama, M. Carrichon is going to give us absolution*, she evidently whispered. They piously bowed their heads with a look of repentance, contrition, and hope. Then I lifted up my hand

and, without uncovering my head, pronounced the form of absolution and the words which follow it, very distinctly, and with supernatural attention. Never shall I forget the expression of their faces. From that moment the storm abated, the rain diminished and seemed only to have fallen for the furtherance of our wishes. I offered up my thanks to God, and so did, I am sure, these pious women. Their exterior appearance spoke contentment, security, and joy. As we advanced through the "Faubourg," the rain having ceased, a curious multitude again lined the two sides of the street, insulting the ladies in the first cart, but above all the Maréchale. Nothing was said to the others. I sometimes walked by the

side of the carts and sometimes preceded them.

At last we reached the fatal spot. I cannot describe what I felt. What a moment! What a separation! What an affliction for the children, husbands, sisters, relations and friends who are to survive those beloved ones in this valley of tears! There they are before me full of health and in one moment I shall see them no more. What anguish! yet not without deep consolation at beholding them so resigned.

We came in sight of the scaffold. The carts stopped, and were immediately surrounded by the soldiers. A ring of numerous spectators was soon formed, most of whom were laughing and amusing themselves at the horrible

sight. It was dreadful to be amongst them!

While the executioner and his two assistants were helping the prisoners out of the first cart, Mme de Noailles' eyes sought for me in the crowd. She caught sight of me. What a wonderful expression there was in those looks! Sometimes raised towards heaven, sometimes lowered towards earth, her eyes so animated, so gentle, so expressive, so heavenly, were often fixed on me in a manner which would have attracted notice if those around me had had time for observation. I pulled my hat over my eyes without taking them off her. I felt as if I could hear her say: *Our sacrifice is accomplished! We have the firm and comforting hope that a merciful*

*God is calling us to him. How many dear to us we leave behind! but we shall forget no one. Farewell to them and thanks to you! Jesus Christ who died for us is our strength. May we die in him. Farewell. May we all meet again in heaven!*

It is impossible to give an idea of the animation and fervour of those signs, the eloquence of which was so touching that the by-standers exclaimed : *Oh! that young woman, how happy she seems, how she looks up to heaven, how she is praying! But what is the use of it all?* and then, on second thoughts : *Oh! the rascals, the bigots!*

The mother and daughter took a last farewell of each other and descended from the cart. As for me, the outer world disappeared for a moment.

At once broken-hearted and comforted, I could only return thanks to God for not having waited for this moment to give them absolution, or, which would have been still worse, delayed it till they had ascended the scaffold. We could not have joined in prayer while I gave, and they received this great blessing as we had been enabled to do in the most favourable circumstances possible at such a time. I left the spot where I was standing, and went over to the other side, while the victims were getting out. I found myself opposite the wooden steps which led to the scaffold. An old man tall and straight, with white hair and a good-natured countenance, was leaning against it. I was told he was a *fermier-général*. Near him stood a very edi-

lying lady whom I did not know. Then came the Maréchale de Noailles exactly opposite me, dressed in black, for she was still in mourning for her husband. She was sitting on a block of wood or stone which happened to be there, her large eyes fixed with a vacant look. I had not omitted to do for her what I had done for so many and in particular for the Maréchal and Maréchale de Mouchy. All the others were drawn up in two lines looking towards the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. From where I stood I could only perceive Mme d'Ayen whose attitude and countenance expressed the most sublime, unaffected and devout resignation. She seemed only occupied with the sacrifice she was about to make to God, through

the merits of the Saviour, his divine Son. She looked as she was wont to do when she had the happiness of approaching the altar for holy communion. I shall never forget the impression she made on me at that moment. It is often in my thoughts. God grant that I may profit by it!

The Maréchale de Noailles was the third person who ascended the scaffold. The upper part of her dress had to be cut away in order to uncover her throat. I was impatient to leave the place, but yet I wished to drink the cup of bitterness to the dregs and to keep my promise, as God was giving me strength to do so, even in the midst of all my shuddering horror. Six ladies followed. Mme d'Ayen was the tenth. How

happy she seemed to die before her daughter! The executioner tore off her cap. As it was fastened by a pin which he had forgotten to remove, he pulled her hair violently and the pain he caused was visible on her countenance.

The mother disappeared, the daughter took her place. What a sight to behold that young creature all in white, looking still younger than she really was, like a gentle lamb going to the slaughter! I fancied I was witnessing the martyrdom of one of the young virgins or holy women whom we read of in the history of the Church. What had happened to the mother also happened to her: the same pain in the removal of her cap, then the same composure and the same death. Oh!

the abundant crimson stream that gushed from the head and neck! How happy she is now, I thought, as her body was thrown into the frightful coffin[1]!

May Almighty God in His mercy bestow on the members of that family all the blessings which I ask and entreat them to ask for mine! May we all be saved with those who have gone before us to that happy dwelling where revolutions are unknown, to that abode which, according to the words of Saint Augustine, has Truth for its King, Charity for its law, and will endure for Eternity!

1. It would appear that Mme de Noailles as well as her mother had exhorted her fellow victims, and amongst them a young man whom she heard blaspheming. As she was ascending the scaffold she turned towards him and said: "*En grâce, monsieur, dites : Pardon.*"

# LIFE

OF

# Mme DE LAFAYETTE

BY

## Mme DE LASTEYRIE

HER DAUGHTER.

I deeply feel, my dear children, the impossibility of speaking to you of my mother so as to give you an idea of the happiness of which you have been deprived. In the midst of our grief, the precious recollections of the past support and comfort our life. You

will never know her whose much loved example would have been such a useful pattern, who would have loved you with a tenderness the charm of which no other being will ever make you understand. I feel my incapacity, but I have an inexpressible desire to speak to you of her. I have collected for you all those of her letters which are in our possession, but I have not been able to find the greater part of her correspondence. All that was written before the Revolution, her correspondence with her sister who was her dearest friend, her letters to my father are lost, and it is precisely that first period of her life with which we could not be personally acquainted. Since then, many important circumstances of her life are not mentioned

in her letters, and I should like to share with you all I can of these recollections. It is that wish which leads me to write down some incidents of that much beloved life, although I feel unequal to my task. I yield to the wish of my heart, but do not succeed in satisfying it.

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My mother was born on the 2nd of November 1759. She was my grandmother's second daughter, and a year younger than my aunt de Noailles. You will find a detailed account of her education in my grand-mother's life written by my mother in the prison of Olmütz. You will there see the tender and enlightened care which was bes-

towed upon her and her four sisters, all of whom preserved, notwithstanding their different dispositions, the precious stamp of their mother's education.

Her love for Mme de Noailles seems to have been the most absorbing feeling of my mother's heart during her childhood. Her affections were early developed, and the tenderness which existed between these two accomplished sisters was most intense. Education as understood by my grandmother tended to cultivate the gifts of God. The habit she had of discussing everything was necessary to my mother's turn of mind, for she never adopted an idea merely out of prejudice. She laid hold of difficulties and sifted them thoroughly.

She was greatly perplexed in early youth by religious doubts. Nevertheless this anxiety did not once deter her from pious practices; on the contrary, her fervour was excited by her wish to discover the truth; but she experienced in these perplexities such torments of mind, that she has since compared them to the greatest troubles undergone by her during a life so full of affliction and sorrow. This tendency began to show itself when she was about twelve years old, and lasted several years. She was then being instructed for her first communion, but her sincere disposition did not allow her to approach Jesus-Christ with a staggering faith. My grand-mother entered into her difficulties, discerned their cause and found therein motives

for comfort. She thought it advisable to defer her first communion, as her daughter wished it, until, calm and free from all doubts, she could taste that happiness in its fulness. She waited with entire trust for that moment to come.

About that time, my grand-mother received proposals of marriage for her two eldest daughters. You have seen in her Life that, alarmed by my father's youth, by the large fortune already in his possession, without parents to guide him[1], she found objections in

1. M. de Lafayette's father had been killed at the battle of Minden at the age of twenty-five, and he himself was scarcely thirteen when he lost his mother, Julie de La Rivière (1770). Mme de Lafayette, the author of *Zaïde* and of the *Princesse de Clèves*, left an only daughter, Mme de La Trémoille, who inherited a part of the Lafayette property. Mme de La Tremoille lent herself to an arrangement by which the estates which the heirs of the name of La-

circumstances which would have seemed advantageous to a person less actuated by views superior to human interests. For a year she refused a consent ardently wished for by her husband; but at last, reassured by all the good she heard of my father, " she accepted, says my mother, him whom she cherished ever after as the most tenderly beloved son, whom she valued from the first moment she became acquainted with him, and who alone could have sustained the strength of my heart after having lost her. "

fayette were anxious to preserve, returned to those of the family who had continued to reside in their native province. The branch of which M. de Lafayette had, in 1759, remained the sole representative thus stood possessed of all the family property in Auvergne, even to the manor of the Maréchal de Lafayette, called Saint-Romain. However M. de Lafayette's fortune came principally from his mother.

My mother's marriage was preceded by that of my aunt, who was united six months before to her cousin, the Vicomte de Noailles. It was on that occasion that my grandmother spoke to her of my father to whom she was even then attached by feelings forerunners of that deep and tender affection which eventually filled her life.

I do not think it is possible to have an idea of my mother's way of loving. It was peculiar to herself. Her affection for my father predominated over every other feeling without diminishing any. It might be said she felt for him the most passionate attachment if that expression was in harmony with the exquisite delicacy which kept her from any sort of jealousy or at least from any of those evil impulses generally at-

tendant upon that feeling. Neither had she ever a moment of *exigence*. Not only was it impossible for my father ever to perceive a wish that could be unwelcome to him, but, even in the depth of her heart, never did there lurk a bitter feeling. She was fourteen and a half when she married. At that time her mind was violently agitated by religious doubts. Notwithstanding the very tender feeling which drew her towards my father, she was much troubled by the thought of the solemn engagement she was taking at so early an age. All she felt appeared to her beyond her strength, and she placed herself under the protection of God to whom, in the midst of her disquietudes, she never ceased to look for support.

My mother's grief at my father's departure to join his regiment, made her feel how deeply she was attached to him. She did not leave her paternal home. In consequence of the extreme youth of both my parents, for my father was but sixteen years of age, it had been agreed that they should pass several years at the Hôtel de Noailles[1].

The following winter was very gay. My mother as well as her sister frequently went both to the play and to balls. She enjoyed all these pleasures with the liveliness of her age and disposition. Nevertheless I do not think she ever allowed herself to join in any, before it had been proved to her that

1. Town residence o the Noailles family.

she was conscientiously obliged to partake in them. Never, even in her earliest youth, did she allow herself to taste a single worldly amusement without being actuated by motives of duty superior to those which forbid them. She did not join in them without reflection, but, once decided, she would enjoy herself thoroughly and without scruple. It is worthy of remark that the religious doubts which tortured her should not have made her less timorous on this point. On the contrary, she was incessantly applying for the grace of God in order to learn the fulness of truth. He granted her prayers; her mind ceased to be troubled. She made her first communion that same year on the first Sunday after Easter, and gave herself up to God in whom

she continued to trust so faithfully amidst all the vicissitudes of life. Shortly afterwards she gave birth to a little girl whom she called Henriette.

In the month of April 1777 my father carried out his plan of going to America. It is easy to judge of my mother's grief on receiving tidings so new, so unexpected and so terrible. In addition to all she was herself suffering, she had the pain of witnessing my grandfather's anger[1]. She felt that the more she excited pity, the more my father would be censured. All

1. " The French ladies, Lord Stomont, English Ambassador, wrote to his government, blame M. de Lafayette's family, for having tried to stop him in so noble an enterprise. " — If the Duc d'Ayen, one of them said, crosses such a son-in-law in such an attempt, he must not hope to find husbands for his other daughters. "

her endeavours were then to conceal the tortures of her heart, preferring to be thought childish or indifferent to bringing down greater blame on his behaviour. My mother found much comfort in the kindness shown to her by my grandmother whose noble mind made her appreciate each detail of her son-in-law's conduct. "She found in it, says my mother, sufficient proof that she need not fear for the happiness of my life saving in proportion to her fears for his." It was with truly maternal tenderness that she broke to her daughter the different accounts of my father's departure, of his arrest, of his return to Bordeaux, and of his ultimate embarkation at the Port du Passage in Spain.

The first accounts of my father's

arrival in America reached my mother a month after the birth of my sister Anastasie. His charming letters, the accounts of his deeds, the success he had already achieved caused her a delight mingled with apprehensions for the dangers of war. These anxieties were not her only trial. She lost her little Henriette at the age of twenty-two months. But in the midst of her grief, my mother felt to the utmost the consolations of religious belief.

The news of my father having been wounded at the battle of the Brandywine reached my mother's ears, but still more alarming reports were hidden from her. The year 1778 passed away amidst the anxieties caused by the perils my father was encountering and

often without any tidings of him. At last, in the month of February 1779, he returned to France recalled by the interests of the American cause.

The intensity of my mother's joy was beyond all expression. This happiness was soon disturbed by fresh alarms which prevented her enjoying in peace my father's return. A projected invasion of England detained him a long time on the coast. During his stay in France he was continually employed in preparing fresh enterprises. My mother's health was shaken at once by past anxieties, by the dread of future dangers, and by a most painful pregnancy. She gave birth to my brother on the 24th of December 1779, day on which we lost her, twenty-seven years later. This event filled her with

joy as well as my father and all those who loved her.

My father left France once more for America where the war still continued. The grief which my mother felt was still greater than at his first departure. Her attachment had been increased both by her anxieties on his account and by the enchanting moments she had spent with him. She was then nineteen. Her impressions had become stronger and deeper; a more intimate and more serious confidence had associated her riper intellect with my father's opinions and designs; her mind was with him as well as her heart. Nevertheless what she suffered during the campaign of Virginia surpassed all she had yet endured. As the English papers, which alone brought any news, always depic-

ted the situation as desperate, the most disastrous reports came to her knowledge; but she had the courage to hide them from her mother, and endeavoured to bear all her sufferings alone. The brilliant conclusion of that campaign, which had been conducted by my father and had ended by the capture of Lord Cornwallis, caused her a happiness which had been purchased by prolonged sufferings. My father arrived unexpectedly in Paris on the 21st of January 1782. The joy of seeing him again returned with so much glory out of so many dangers, and the fascination of his presence were intensely felt by my mother[1]. So overpowering were her

1. "All those who lived at that time still remember the enthusiasm excited by M. de Lafayette's arrival. It was shared by the Queen herself. The

feelings that for several months she felt ready to faint every time he left the room. She was alarmed at the vehemence of her passion, fearing that she could not always conceal it from my father and that it might become annoying to him, and she therefore endeavoured to restrain it for his sake only.

She gave birth to me in September 1782, after seven months of much suffering and incessant care. Peace restored to my mother a tranquillity which she greatly required.

news of the return of the conqueror of Cornwallis arrived in the midst of a grand *fête* which was celebrated at the *Hôtel de Ville* in honor of the Dauphin's birth. Mme de Lafayette who was present received a very remarkable proof of royal favour. The Queen herself drove her back in her own carriage to the Hôtel de Noailles, where M. de Lafayette had just arrived." (*Mémoires et Souvenirs du Comte de Ségur*, vol. I, p. 180.)

My brother's education was the continual subject of my mother's thoughts. She considered it as her first duty to instruct her son in the doctrines and morals of Christianity, and to seek every means of rendering them acceptable to his heart. Notwithstanding the difficulties inherent to the performance of christian duties at that period, there was not one which, at the cost of every sacrifice, she did not wish her son to fulfil. She was charged at the same time with the accomplishment of my father's intentions and was anxious to be worthy of the trust reposed in her. For herself also, she wished to find in a tutor the qualities my father desired. It was in the sight of God and guided by the principles of an enlightened piety that, although placing above all things the

preservation of faith, she would have thought herself guilty had she neglected in her son's education anything which it is good and useful to acquire. She believed that learning, combined with rectitude of heart, leads us to the knowledge of God. She and my father selected M. Frestel as George's tutor. My mother then made a painful sacrifice. She thought that my father's constant occupations and that his high position might be prejudicial to her son's education if he remained at home, by unavoidably diverting him from his studies and causing feelings of pride and vanity to arise in his heart. She hired therefore for M. Frestel and his pupil, then six years old, a small lodging, rue Saint Jacques, where she frequently visited them. Ours

was the happy lot of remaining with her.

You will find in my grandmother's Life details on the family interests of that period. Her fourth daughter married M. de Montagu and my aunt de Noailles gave birth to her dear Alexis. My mother quitted the Hôtel de Noailles to reside in a house which my father had bought in the rue de Bourbon[1] nearly at the corner of the rue de Bourgogne. This did not prevent her from passing many hours every day with her mother.

During the course of that year, she made a journey to Chavaniac, my father's birth place in Auvergne. There she became warmly attached to his

1 Now called rue de Lille.

aunt, Mme de Chavaniac, for whom she ever after entertained those feelings of filial devotion which held so great a place in her life. It was at that time that Mme du Roure, my grandmother's third daughter, who was a widow, married M. de Thésan, and that her youngest daughter was united to M. de Grammont. To this marriage my mother owed a tenderly beloved brother.

An earnest wish to contribute to all that was good, and a horror for all injustice, were prominent features in my mother's character. It was therefore with deep satisfaction that she witnessed my father's efforts in favour of the abolition of the slave trade. He purchased a plantation at Cayenne, *La Belle Gabrielle*, in order to give the

example of gradual emancipation. Every just and liberal idea found a place in my mother's heart and her active zeal made her seek ardently for every means of putting them into immediate execution. My father intrusted her with all the details of this undertaking in which the desire of teaching the negroes of that plantation the first principles of religion and of morals was united with the wish she shared with my father of making them worthy of liberty. The agent they selected was M. de Richeprey who was truly fit for such a mission and devoted himself to it. She got acquainted with priests of the *séminaire du Saint-Esprit* who had an establishment at Cayenne. Would that we possessed her correspondence with these mis-

sionaries! We should there see the good she had already done and the good she meant to do. Her zeal for all philanthropic ideas was also increased by religious views. Her charity was excited by the hope of teaching the blacks to know and love God and of proving to the free-thinkers who sympathized with the negroes that the success of their undertaking would be in great part due to religion. The events of the Revolution have not allowed us to see these hopes realized, but we have at least had the satisfaction of hearing that the negroes of *La Belle Gabrielle* did not commit the atrocities which were perpetrated in other places.

In 1787, my father employed himself in obtaining civil rights for the

Protestants. He made a motion to that effect at the *Assemblée des Notables*[1], and was seconded by M. de Laluzerne, bishop of Langres. My father had previously gone to Nimes to make himself better acquainted with all the grievances of which he was endeavouring to obtain the redress. My mother shared in all his feelings and received with the deepest sympathy Protestant clergymen whom the carrying out of this enterprise attracted to her house. Her enlightened zeal for religion made her wish that injustice should no longer be committed in its name. The more she was a child of the Church, the more she abhorred persecutions which were fitted to alienate the hearts of men

1. Sitting of the 23rd of May 1787.

and which moreover were so contrary to the spirit of the Gospel. My mother's tolerance was founded on the first principles of religion. She thought it a grave error to infringe upon that liberty which God has left to man, or to influence, by holding out worldly advantages, a determination which conscience alone should dictate. She wished to draw others to Catholicism but from the highest motives. Never did I witness a greater desire to make proselytes. Her active zeal gave her the means of doing so, either by becoming intimate with those whom she wished to enlighten, or by removing the obstacles which their peculiar positions cast in the way of their conversion. Nothing was neglected by her when she foresaw a chance however

uncertain, however remote, of gaining converts to the Catholic faith. She frequently had occasions of manifesting that zeal which was always accompanied by such tact and feeling that it never became importunate. In her were to be found happily combined the most liberal principles of tolerance with the warmest zeal for religion.

Faith sanctified my mother's charity for the poor. Her activity made her useful to a great number of distressed persons. Good works greatly occupied her time, and she devoted herself to them as much as her family duties permitted her to do so. She did not believe that she could conscientiously spend the smallest sum for her own pleasure, neither did she ever indulge in any fancy. She thought that what-

ever money is not required for keeping up social position belongs to the poor, and that it is positively forbidden to employ it in any other manner. That principle, acknowledged in theory by all pious persons, but so often neglected in practice, was strictly adhered to by my mother.

In August 1788, my mother met with a great misfortune. Her sister, Mme de Thésan, died, leaving an only daughter.

The Revolution had, for a long time back, been gradually approaching. The States General were convoked and met in the month of May 1789. After the 14th of July, my father was elected Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard of Paris. His whole existence was bound up with the events of that pe-

riod. You may imagine the cruel anxiety in which my mother passed the three first years of the Revolution. She was free from all prejudice; besides she had long shared my father's principles which would in any case have been her own; she approved, she admired his conduct; she was the partner of all his views, and was supported in the midst of her moral sufferings by the thought that he was working to obtain the triumph of right. The first misfortunes of the Revolution filled her soul with such bitterness that she was insensible to the natural feelings of *amour-propre* which my father's conduct would otherwise have called forth. Her only satisfaction was to see him often sacrifice his popularity to oppose any disorderly or arbitrary act. She

had adopted liberal opinions and professed them openly, but she possessed that feminine tact, the shades of which it would be impossible to delineate, and was thereby prevented from being what was then called a *femme de parti*. Her disposition led her not to fear the censure of certain *coteries*, but she shuddered when she thought of the incalculable consequences of the events which were taking place, and she was incessantly praying for the mercy of God, whilst she fulfilled all the requirements of her arduous life.

She accepted the requests which were made to her by each of the sixty districts of Paris, to collect subscriptions at the blessing of their banners and at other patriotic ceremonies. My father kept open house. She did the honors in

a manner which charmed her numerous guests; but what she suffered in the depths of her heart can only be understood by those who have heard her talk of those times. She beheld my father at the head of a revolution the issue of which it was impossible to foresee. Each calamity, each disturbance was looked upon by her without the slightest illusion as to the success of her own cause. She was however supported by my father's principles and so convinced of the good it was in his power to do and of the evil it was in his power to avert, that she bore with incredible fortitude the continual perils to which he was exposed. Never, has she often told us, did she see him leave the house during that period without thinking that she was

bidding him adieu for the last time. Although no one could be more terrified than she was when those whom she loved were in danger, still, during that time, she was superior to her usual self, devoted, in common with my father, to the hope of preventing crime.

My grand-mother's tenderness for her daughter was a great consolation to both of them. Her opinions were those of the court party. She had a horror of all disturbance and a great dread of those social convulsions which accompany revolutions. But her noble spirit and her generous heart taught her to appreciate each detail of the conduct of my father whose character she had so early and so well understood. The Vicomtesse de Noailles,

my mother's angelic sister, shared in all she felt. There was a great charm in her intelligent tenderness. We were then too young to have part in my mother's anxieties; my sister however was beginning to be a comfort to her. She made her first communion in 1790. This was my mother's chief concern in the midst of the great events of that period. She experienced a joyful and holy satisfaction in presenting her child to Jesus-Christ, and in imploring with her His blessings on my father's head.

The civil constitution of the clergy was a subject of great tribulation to my mother. She considered that, on account of her peculiar situation, it was her duty to testify her attachment to the Catholic cause. She was there-

fore present when the "curé" de Saint-Sulpice, whose parishioner she was, refused from the pulpit to take the oath.

She was there surrounded by those who were most known for their aristocratic tendencies. She repaired assiduously first to the churches, then to the oratories where the persecuted clergy had taken refuge. Nuns who had suffered insults would come to her for protection, and likewise priests who had refused to take the oaths and whom she encouraged to exercise their ministery and to demand liberty for their form of worship. My father was far from interfering with her, but you must fancy how painful to my mother was the thought that she was thus doing him real injury and diminishing

his popularity which it was so important to maintain. But no consideration ever made her hesitate when she had a duty to perform. She found support in thus giving my father frequent opportunities of showing his respect for liberty of worship and his firmness in maintaining it. My mother's wish would have been to serve the cause of religion still more effectually by bringing round several high dignitaries of the Church to more conciliatory views. For that purpose she sought interviews with several bishops whose piety she revered. But whilst doing full justice to the rectitude of their intentions and of their character, she was grieved to find that their political opinions, and especially the confidence they reposed in dangerous ad-

visers, destroyed the effect of their pacific intentions.

My father often received constitutional clergymen at dinner. On those occasions, my mother would express before them her attachment to the cause of the former bishops. She would discuss her opinion with those whose personal character she esteemed, and in these conversations she manifested such enlightened views, gave proofs of so much sincerity, and was, at the same time, so careful of offending, that no one could be wounded by the expression of her feelings. Independently of their conduct or opinions, all were received by her according to my father's wishes, without her own consideration being diminished, because she preserved on every subject the li-

berty of expressing her way of thinking. Once only did she depart from the rule she had laid down for herself, that of receiving all sorts of persons equally well; it was the day when the bishop of Paris, after his instalment, came to dine at my father's. He did not, like his colleagues, come as a private individual, and she declined receiving him as bishop of the diocese. Accordingly, she dined out that day, although her doing so was much remarked.

The various events of the Revolution, the dangers incurred by my father, the manner in which he supported every principle of justice and of liberty against all parties, form the history of my mother's anxieties and consolations during two years and a

half. You have read in the history of the Revolution that considerable uproar was raised on the Monday of Passion Week 1791, to prevent the King from going to Saint-Cloud where he wished to receive the sacrament from the hands of priests *non assermentés*. The King did not put this plan into execution, notwithstanding the endeavours of my father, who entreated Louis XVI to persist in his intention which he undertook to have executed. The King refused.

My father, displeased with the National Guard who had but feebly supported him in presence of the populace, and with the King's weakness which rendered it impossible to retrieve the faults committed on that day, thought fit to resign the command

of the National Guard of Paris, and to avoid all entreaties, he quitted his own house. My mother remained at home, transported with joy at the resolution he had taken, and was charged by him to receive in his stead the municipality and the sixty battalions who came to implore him to resume his command. She replied to each individual in the words which my father himself would have dictated, carefully marking by her demeanour the distinction she made between the most respectable *chefs de bataillon*, and those who, like Santerre, had necessitated by their misconduct my father's resignation, and who that day all united in taking the same step and repeating the same protestations. My mother, perplexed as she was in performing so difficult a task,

was overjoyed at the thoughts that my father had returned to private life. This satisfaction lasted four days. Having thus marked his displeasure at disorders which he had not been able to prevent, my father yielded to the general entreaties. He resumed his command, and my mother her trials and anxieties.

On the 21st of June of the same year 1791, the King left Paris secretly, but was soon brought back from Varennes where he had been arrested. In no other circumstance of my father's life did my mother so much admire him as in the one which I am now relating. She beheld him, on one hand, relinquishing all his republican tendencies to join in the wish of the majority; on the other hand, amidst the dif-

ficulties in which he was placed by his position, taking every responsibility, bearing all censure so as to ensure the safety of the royal family and spare them as much as was in his power every painful detail. My mother hastened to the Tuileries so soon as the Queen began to receive and before the Constitution had been accepted. She found herself there the only woman connected with the *patriote* party, for she believed, as my father did, that politics at such a moment ought not to rule personal intercourse.

The Jacobins raised on the 17th of July a considerable outbreak. The *brigands* commenced by murdering two men. Martial law was proclaimed. It is difficult to form an idea of my mother's mortal anguish while my father

was in the Champ de Mars exposed to the rage of an infuriated multitude which dispersed crying out that my mother must be put to death and her head carried to meet him. I remember the fearful cries we heard, I remember the alarm of every body in the house, and above all my mother's joy at the thoughts that the *brigands* who were coming to attack her were no longer surrounding my father in the Champ de Mars. While embracing us with tears of joy, she took every necessary precaution against the approaching danger with the greatest calmness and above all with the greatest relief of mind. The guard had been doubled, and was drawn up before the house, but the *brigands* were very near entering my mother's apartment by

the garden looking upon the place du Palais-Bourbon, and were already climbing the low wall which protected us, when a body of cavalry passed on the place and dispersed them.

The Constitution having been accepted by the King, the Constituent Assembly ended its sittings[1] and was replaced by the Legislative Assembly. My father gave up the command of the National Guard, and set out for Auvergne, with my mother in the beginning of October. The journey was long for they were often obliged to stop in order to acknowledge the marks of sympathy they received on the way. We followed in another carriage, and my brother joined us shortly afterwards.

1. September 29, 1791.

We were thus all assembled together at Chavaniac, with our aunt, Mme de Chavaniac, who was then seventy-two. My grandmother, Mme d'Ayen and my aunt, Mme de Noailles, came also to share our happiness; but my mother, wearied by all she had suffered, was not yet able fully to enjoy it.

This interval of repose was of short duration. My father was appointed to the command of one of the three armies which were formed at that time. He left Chavaniac in December 1791. This departure, the expectation of an approaching war, the dread of fresh disturbances, all contributed to renew my mother's distress; those who might have shared her feelings had left her. My grandmother and, soon after, my aunt de Noailles were obliged to return

to Paris. She bade them a farewell which she was far from supposing was to be the last. The violence of Mme de Chavaniac's political feelings, her total incapacity of judging the actual state of public affairs, prevented her, at that moment, from being of any use to my mother. My sister alone was of some comfort to her, notwithstanding her extreme youth: she was then fourteen. At that moment, my mother's sorrows were increased by the emigration of Mme de Montagu, who had departed for England with her husband.

War was declared in the month of March 1792. It began by several skirmishes at my father's army in one of which M. de Gouvion, who had been Major-General of the National Guard,

was killed. My mother was filled with terror and harassed by fearful forebodings. The disturbances at home added to her dismay.

My father's letter to the Legislative Assembly[1] against the Jacobins and his appearance at the bar to support it, mingled with these anxieties the satisfaction she was accustomed to find in all his actions. But one can well understand how much she must have suffered at such a distance, on seeing him exposed to so many and such various dangers. He invited her to go and join him; but, in those times of public commotion, she feared that, if she accepted his proposal, he might be

1. Letter written from the camp of Maubeuge on June 16, 1792,

accused of wishing to put his family in safety; she was also afraid of impeding his movements which depended on so many uncertain events. After having thought it over several days, she decided upon sacrificing herself and remaining at Chavaniac. A battalion of the *Volontaires de la Gironde,* on its way to the army, passed through the village about that time; they were very violent; several of them even threatened to set fire to the house. My mother invited the officers to dinner, and gave orders for the detachment which was billeted in the village to be fed at her expense. Her dignified manner and her evident patriotism inspired respect, and preserved us from any unpleasant incident.

Shortly after the noble resolution

my mother had taken of remaining at Chavaniac, she received intelligence of the insurrection of the 10th of August. She heard almost at the same time that my grandfather[1], who had been defending the King at the Tuileries, and my uncle, M. de Grammont, who had been sought for amongst the dead, had both escaped the dangers of that dreadful day. The newspapers gave details of my father's resistance at Sédan. But it was soon evident that all was useless, and nothing could be compared to the anguish of my mother's heart during the days which followed. The public papers were full of sanguinary decrees which were submitted to everywhere, except in the district un-

1. The Duc d'Ayen.

der my father's command. A price was set on his head, promises were made at the bar of the Assembly to bring him back, dead or alive. At length, on the 24th of August, she received a letter from her sister, Mme de Noailles, telling her that my father was out of France. My mother's joy was equal to her despair on the preceding days, and formed a striking contrast with the deep sorrow felt by my aunt who, not having hitherto realized the gravity of the state of things, was solely struck by the idea of never again beholding her dear nephew. My mother's apprehensions had been shared by the members of the household, and they all came to congratulate her in a manner all the more touching that they were in daily expectation of the house being

pillaged. My mother provided for every thing, burnt or concealed her papers; then, in consequence of the alarming intelligence she received, she resolved to place her children in safety. A priest *assermenté* came to offer her a place of refuge amidst the mountains. M. Frestel took my brother there during the night. The same evening she sent us to Langeac, a small town about two leagues from Chavaniac, and thus having made every arrangement, she calmly awaited coming events. She remained with my aunt whom it would have been impossible to persuade to leave the place.

Nevertheless, some days afterwards, calmer feelings having prevailed around her, my mother thought it might be useful for her to go to Brioude, the

chief-town of the district. There she received from many people proofs of the most lively interest; but she refused the marks of sympathy proffered by several *aristocrates* ladies, declaring she would take as an insult any token of esteem which could not be shared with my father, and which would tend to separate her cause from his. At the same time, before returning to Chavaniac, she publicly attended mass celebrated by a priest who had not taken the oath. By a decree of the "district" the seals were affixed on the house. My mother herself had caused this measure to be taken, so as to command respect from the *brigands* who were every day expected. The word *émigré* was not inscribed in the official report, and the respect shown by the two

commissaries led her to hope that she had nothing to dread, at least on the part of the administration. She therefore yielded to the earnest entreaties of her daughters and allowed them to return to Chavaniac. We found her in possession of two letters from my father, written after his departure from France[1]. These letters cheered her greatly. Although she flattered herself that he would soon be released, she was nevertheless much agitated by the news of his arrest.

On the 10th of September 1792, at eight o'clock in the morning, the house was invested by a party of armed men and my mother's room was invaded

1. One from Rochefort dated August 27, and one to Mme de Chavaniac from Nivelle, of the 25th. See *Mémoires de M. de Lafayette*, vol. III.

by soldiers who were led by a man of Le Puy, suspected of having lately had a hand in the murder of a prisoner. A commissary named Aulagnier, who was one of the party, presented her with an order from the Committee of Public Safety giving directions for her to be sent to Paris with her children. This order was enclosed in a letter from M. Roland, dated September 2nd, charging him with the execution of this decree. At that very moment my sister entered the room. She had managed to escape from our governess so as to take away all means of hiding her and separating her from my mother.

My mother did not show the least alarm. She felt the importance of not detaining the soldiers, one of

whom boasted to her of having killed his officer because he was an *aristocrate*, and wished to put herself as soon as possible under the protection of those authorities who could give her effectual aid. She had the horses put to immediately, and while the preparations for departure were being made, her writing desk was opened and my father's letters seized :

" You will see in them, Sir, said my mother to the commissary, that if there had been tribunals in France, M. de Lafayette would have submitted to them, certain as he was that not an action of his life could criminate him in the eyes of real patriots.

—Now-a-days, Madam, he answered, public opinion is the only tribunal. "

During that time the soldiers were

exploring the house. One of them, on seeing the old family pictures, said to the housekeeper who was nearly blind from old age.

" Who are these? some grand *aristocrates*, no doubt?

— Good people who are no more, she answered. If they were still alive, things would not be going on as badly as they are now. "

The soldiers contented themselves with running their bayonets through several pictures.

My mother slipped away to give orders for my concealment. Then, with my sister who would not leave her for a minute, she returned to her room, happy in the midst of her alarm not to have been able to prevent her from following. My aunt, then seventy-three

years of age, who had never, under any consideration, been induced to leave Chavaniac, declared she would not separate herself from her niece and said, with generous abnegation, that she would accompany her even to Paris. They departed, followed by their servants, who hoped to make themselves useful by mixing with the soldiers.

The journey was most trying. However, notwithstanding the fear inspired by the escort, the captive ladies received in the villages through which they passed unanimous marks of sympathy. The soldiers being fatigued, they spent the night at Fix. The next morning, on arriving at Le Puy, my mother requested to be immediately conducted to the "département." "I respect orders

coming from the "administration", she said to the commissary, as much as I detest those coming from elsewhere."

The entrance into the town was perilous: a few days previously a prisoner had been massacred on his way through the suburbs. My mother said to my sister: "If your father knew you were here, how anxious he would be, but, at the same time, what pleasure your conduct would give him."

The prisoners arrived without injury, although many cries were heard and several stones were thrown into the carriage. They alighted at the "département," the members of which had been immediately convoked. As soon as the sitting began, my mother said that she placed herself with confidence

under the protection of the "département," because in it she beheld the authority of the people which she always respected wherever it could be found.

"You receive, *Messieurs*, she added, your orders from M. Roland or from whomsoever you please. As for me, I only choose to receive them from you, and I give myself up as your prisoner."

She then requested that my father's letters should be copied before they were sent to Paris, observing that falsehoods were often brought before the Assembly; she asked leave to read these letters aloud. Some one having expressed the fear that doing so might be painful to her: "On the contrary, she replied, I find support

and comfort in the feelings they contain."

She was listened to at first with interest, then with deep emotion. All the authorities of the town had been summoned and arrived one after another in the assembly-room of the "département." Far from suffering her mind to be diverted by the difficulty of her situation, she thought of everything. She remarked in the demeanour of the "maire", M. Bertrand, a good-will towards her which might have placed him in a dangerous position. In order to avert any accusation of the sort, she openly reproached him for having so long ceased his visits to Chavaniac.

After having read the letters and looked over the copies, she begged not

to leave the house of the "département" as long as she remained at Le Puy. She exposed the injustice of her detention, how useless and perilous a journey to Paris would be, and concluded by saying that if they persisted in keeping her as a hostage she would be much obliged to the "département" were she allowed to make Chavaniac her prison, and in that case she offered her parole not to leave it. It was decided in the next sitting, owing to the devoted and courageous exertions of the president, M. de Montfleury, that the "département" should present her request to the minister[1]. While awaiting the reply, the prisoners were to inhabit the building

1. See the original papers at the end of the volume.

belonging to the "administration". The authorities wrote to M. Roland saying how dangerous it would be to make the prisoners travel at that moment. My mother also wrote to M. Brissot with whom she had formerly been acquainted. This is her letter:

"Le Puy, September 12th 1792.

"Sir,

"I believe you to be sincerely fanatic for liberty. It is a compliment I pay to very few people at this moment. I shall not examine whether that fanaticism, like religious fanaticism, does not generally defeat its own object, but I cannot persuade myself that one who has done so much for the emancipation of the negroes can be the agent of tyranny. I believe

that if you are impassioned by the ends which your party seeks, at least you will abhor the means it employs. I am sure that you esteem, I might almost say that you respect M. Lafayette as a sincere and courageous friend of liberty, even when you persecute him because his opinions are different from your own as to the means of establishing freedom in France, and supported by courage like his and by a faithful adherence to his oaths, are contrary to the party in which you have enlisted and to your new revolution. I believe all this, and therefore I apply to you, although disdaining to address myself to others. If I am mistaken, tell me so, and I shall have troubled you for the last time.

"A *lettre de cachet* from M. Roland,

of the 2nd of September, in compliance with a resolution of the Committee of General Safety, dated August 19, caused me to be brought here on Monday last by an individual, Justice of the peace in this town, who had received orders to convey me to Paris with my children, if they were found with me, after having communicated with the "département" of Haute-Loire, in the jurisdiction of which I had fixed my retreat. I state with sorrow that the *procureur général syndic* of the department had the weakness to give M. Roland's commissary an order for an armed force, and with gratitude that that commissary and his men paid us every sort of attention on the way. My eldest daughter was with me, and far from trying to hide herself, she rejoiced

that the orders were common to us both. An aunt of my husband's, for whose sake I had remained separated from him all last winter, has been kind enough to accompany me here.

"When M. Aulagnier, the commissary, asked me where I desired to be conveyed to in this town, I answered that my wish was to put myself under the protection of the municipality and to go to the "département" whose business it was, in the town of Le Puy, to give orders at Chavaniac, my place of residence, belonging to the district of Brioude and to the "canton" of Paulhaguet. What I said on entering the assembly room, and what was decided upon by the "conseil général" and the commissary who had arrested me, is recorded in the official report in which

I expressed my wishes and made my request to the "département". My aunt desired me to speak of the fatigues of a journey after the many trials my health has undergone, but I would not allege a pretext when I had such good reasons for not going to Paris. I was about to speak of the dangers which the events of the 2nd of September made one fear, but having asked the date of M. Roland's letter, and having found that it had been written on that very day, I was desirous of sparing remarks which might be wounding to his feelings; for although I do not wish to address myself to him, still I would not insult him. I merely said to the members of the "département" that, as I was under their protection, it was their business to foresee and to

prevent the dangers I might have to fear. They intend writing in concert with M. Aulagnier, and I shall trust to their prudence.

"I do not know what the answer will be; it is easy to see that if it is dictated by justice, it will restore me to complete liberty. If it is according to my heart's desire, I shall be allowed to join my husband in England as soon as he is delivered from prison, in order that we may go to America and establish ourselves together so soon as the voyage can be effected. But if I am to be kept as a hostage, my captivity would be less hard to bear were I permitted to choose Chavaniac as my prison on parole and on the responsibility of the municipality of my village. If you wish to serve me, you will have

the satisfaction of doing a good action by mitigating the fate of one who is unjustly persecuted and who, as you well know, has neither the means nor the wish to injure."

"I consent to owe you that service.

"NOAILLES LAFAYETTE."

While in prison, my mother received touching marks of sympathy. Permission to see her could be easily obtained, and everybody asked to do so without apprehension. She was often watched by friendly national guards who would ask to be employed on that duty in order to prevent its being intrusted to evil-disposed keepers. She sometimes received accounts of my brother who still remained in the same place of refuge, and of me, for she

had thought fit to have me also concealed at a few leagues from Chavaniac.

If the captives' condition was at that time tolerable, public affairs were most inauspicious. All honest officials took favourable opportunities for resigning and were replaced by Jacobins. We learnt that my father, instead of being set free, had been delivered up by the coalition to the King of Prussia and was on his way to Spandau. The impression produced on my mother by this news was dreadful. She was in despair at having given her parole to stay at Chavaniac, for, notwithstanding the impossibility of leaving France, she could not bear the thoughts of pledging her word to give up seeking every means of rejoining my father.

M. Roland's answer came at the end

of September. He allowed my mother to return to Chavaniac, a prisoner on parole, under the responsibility of the "administration". But as he had been offended by several sentences of the letter M. Brissot had shown him, he wrote him one, at the same time, which was full of insults for my father and of rudeness for my mother, and which concluded by saying that the expression which she had made use of "*to consent to owe him a service,*" *came from the antiquated pride of what was called nobility.* This letter was read aloud to the "département" and applauded with frenzy especially the last sentence which was read three times over. My mother thus received the permission she had asked for at the precise moment when she was struck with dismay

by the situation my father was in, and by the dangers he was running now at the hands of foreign powers as lately at those of the revolutionists at home. She felt that she could not refuse a promise which she had herself proposed to make, besides that escape was impossible and that it was still more impossible to leave France; nevertheless she was in despair at depriving herself of all hopes of joining my father. The "département" proposed to the municipality of Aurat, the "commune" in which Chavaniac was situated, to take charge of my mother under its own responsibility. As the *municipaux* did not well understand the meaning of this word, one of them inquired whether she would take the engagement to remain at Chavaniac, "for in that

case, he added, I would answer for her on my sole responsibility, for she is a worthy woman".

The "département" decided that the "commune" would each day supply six men to guard my mother, who went to the assembly-room immediately on hearing of this resolution.

"I here declare, gentlemen, she said, that I will not give the parole I offered if guards are to be placed at my door. Choose between these two securities. I cannot be offended by your not trusting me, for my husband has given still better proofs of his patriotism than I have of my honesty; but you will allow me to believe in my own integrity and not to add bayonets to my parole."

It was decided that no guard would

be set and that the municipality would every fortnight report my mother's presence at Chavaniac.

Before leaving Le Puy, my mother, for whom her parole had become an overpowering weight, wrote a second letter to M. Brissot. It is true that M. Roland's insulting letter had been the only answer she had received to her first application; but, on the other hand, M. Brissot had obtained for her the permission she had asked for and was beginning to separate himself from the terrorist party.

This is her letter which was found, as well as the former one, amongst Brissot's papers.

"Le Puy, October 4th 1792, day previous to my departure for Chavaniac.

"I ought not, Sir, to write to you again, considering the use you make of my letters. But the feelings of revolt which have sprung up in my heart at my unjust captivity, at the hard necessity of applying to the enemies of the object of my affections, and at the hackneyed calumnies addressed to me by M. Roland, are surpassed, since yesterday's news, by my deep affliction and alarm on hearing of the captivity even still more terrible than mine, of one who, still more than I do, deserves to be free. Do not expect any longer to find bitterness in my expressions nor even the pride of oppressed innocence. I plead my cause with the sole desire

of gaining it. I have already written to M. Roland by the last courier. I had just read in your gazette, the only one which contains any news of my husband, that he had been separated from MM. de Maubourg and de Pusy[1] and that he had been transferred to Spandau. His misfortunes, the risk his health is running, what I have to fear, what I have to learn, all these sufferings are too heavy for me to bear while separated from him. And when I reflect how utterly useless to my country are all these tortures of my heart, I do not believe that anybody can persist in binding me by an engagement, too

1. The Marquis de Latour-Maubourg and M. Bureaux de Pusy, members of the Constituent Assembly, had left France with M. de Lafayette. They shared his captivity.

lightly taken, but which is the price put to the alleviation of my captivity. Truly, Sir, it is attaching far too much importance to my person and too little to the prolongation of an act of injustice, thus to protract my confinement.

"After all your interest has obtained for me, after your courageous conduct in withstanding a bloodthirsty faction, I do not believe that you cannot and will not obtain from the Committee to cancel its decree. That decision was taken at a moment when it was feared that M. Lafayette's opinions might encourage citizens in their fidelity to the Constitution. I feel certain you could obtain that M. Roland's order, which is entirely founded on that decision, should also be revoked, and that complete freedom should be restored to me. It

is impossible that a certificate of residence in the prisons of the enemy for devotion to the cause of liberty, should not be worth, for M. Lafayette's wife, the advantages an artist's wife would find in a certificate testifying that her husband was travelling to instruct himself in his art. I shall not speak of the barbarity of keeping wives as hostages, but I shall say that it is now completely impossible for my husband to harm or serve any cause. Allow me to repeat that it was only when reduced to the last extremity that he gave up serving the cause of liberty.

"I confess, Sir, I shall never believe that he who has so long sought to obtain the abolition of slavery, can refuse to employ his eloquence in delivering from slavery a woman who asks for no

other liberty than that of locking herself up within the walls or at least near the walls of the citadel of Spandau. M. Roland is good enough to assure me that he is persuaded *I could not nor would not do any harm.* Then I must be set free; for, according to the principles professed by M. Roland himself, *good must be done to all, with the least possible harm for each.* And what harm would my freedom do? Let foreign enemies alone gratify their hatred against a sincere friend of liberty. Do not join with them by persecuting him in those most dear to his heart; let them see that in our country are to be found courageous representatives of the people, who abhor useless crimes, and defend innocence, at least when it is weak and suffering.

"I hope soon to receive an answer to this letter. You can see by my words how utterly miserable I am, but no expression can describe the distracted state I am in, nor the gratitude I should feel towards my liberators, however great the sufferings they have hitherto made me endure.

"NOAILLES LAFAYETTE."

My mother, on learning that M. Roland had expressed his disapprobation of the massacres of September, and that he alone could free her from the engagement she had contracted, decided, notwithstanding her reluctance, on writing to him the following letter:

"Sir,

"I can only attribute to a kind feeling the change you have brought

about in my situation. You have spared me the dangers of a too perilous journey, and consented that my place of retirement should be my prison. But any prison whatsoever has become insupportable to me since I learnt this morning, in M. Brissot's gazette, that my husband had been transferred from town to town by the enemies of France, who were conducting him to Spandau. However repugnant to my feelings it may be to owe anything to men who have shown themselves the enemies and the accusers of him whom I revere and love as I ought to do, it is in all the frankness of my heart that I vow eternal gratitude to whoever would enable me to join my husband, by taking all responsibility from the "administration", and by giving me

back my parole, if, in the event of France becoming more free, it were possible to travel without danger.

"It is on my knees, if necessary, that I implore this favour; imagine by that the state I am in.

"NOAILLES LAFAYETTE."

My mother, my aunt and my sister returned to Chavaniac, accompanied by several *administrateurs;* even they were moved by the manner in which the captives were received. They found the municipality awaiting their arrival. "M. Roland, said my mother to the commissaries, believes it is owing to aristocratic prejudices that I am reluctant to owe him a good office; yet I feel great pleasure, and consider myself much honoured in being under

the protection of the members of the "commune" of Aurat, because, for them, I have the greatest esteem." After the departure of the *administrateurs* of Le Puy, my mother gave supper to the *municipaux*, and drank with them to my father's health.

M. Frestel, having left his place of retreat, came in the middle of the night to confer with my mother. In her grief at being so far distant from my father, she wished to send him his son, and thought that, once out of France, George might succeed in joining him, or at least in being of use to him. It was therefore decided that George should depart with M. Frestel, who was to procure a tradesman's licence and then a passport to go to the fair of Bordeaux. From thence the

two travellers were to endeavour to get over to England, there to confer with M. Pinkney, the American minister, in order to settle with him what was to be done for my father. My mother denied herself the comfort of seeing my brother before his departure. She feared her courage would fail her at the moment of parting. She wrote to General Washington, conjuring him to claim back my father from the power which was retaining him captive whichever it might be, and to have him conveyed to America. "If his family, she added, could accompany him, it is easy to imagine what happiness would be his, but if this were to bring any obstacle or any delay, we entreat you not to think of us; we shall be far less unhappy when we learn that he is near you."

M. Beauchet[1] had been intrusted with my mother's letters to MM. Brissot and Roland. Brissot received him with circumspection and expressed himself in guarded terms. He wished, he said, that it might become possible to leave the *citoyenne Lafayette à l'industrie du sentiment qui l'animait.* M. Roland seemed moved and answered without delay:

"I have put, Madam, he wrote, your touching request under the eyes of the Committee. I must nevertheless observe that it would seem to me imprudent for a person bearing your name to travel through France, on account of

1. M. Beauchet, *commis à la liquidation*, husband to one of my mother's women, or rather to one of her dearest friends. (*Note by Mme de Lasteyrie.*)

the unpleasant impression which is, at the present moment, attached to it. But circumstances may alter. I advise you to wait, and I shall be the first to seize a favourable opportunity."

My mother answered him immediately in the following manner:

"I return you thanks, Sir, for the ray of hope with which you have brightened my heart, so long unaccustomed to that feeling. Nothing can add to what I owe to my parole and to the *administrateurs* who rely upon it. No degree of misfortune could ever make me think of breaking my word, but your letter renders that duty a little more supportable, and I already begin to feel something of that gratitude I promised you if, delivered through

your hands, I were restored to the object of my affections and to the happiness of offering him some consolation."

"NOAILLES LAFAYETTE."

Three months had elapsed since we had heard anything about my father. The public papers had announced his translation to Wesel instead of Spandau; since then they had been silent. My mother wrote an unsealed letter to the Duke of Brunswick, entreating the Generalissimo of the allied troops to send her some news of her husband through the French army. She enclosed her letter in the following note to M. Servan, minister of war:

"Sir,

"I have not the honor of being known to you, nor have I that of be-

ing sufficiently acquainted with you to be aware of what rights innocence and misfortune may have in your eyes. It is now three months since I have heard anything of my husband who is a prisoner of the enemies of France. It is not my intention at present to set forth his rights to the esteem and interest of his fellow-citizens. How could a woman's tears gain that which the whole life of the most incorruptible upholder of liberty has not succeeded in obtaining? But I claim my personal rights to your compassion, and I implore you to kindly send this unsealed note to the Generalissimo of the allied armies.

"The importance I attach to your doing me this good office ensures my gratitude.

"NOAILLES LAFAYETTE."

It was again M. Beauchet who undertook to carry this letter. On his arrival, M. Servan was no longer minister, and it was delivered to Pache, his successor, who refused to send the note; but M. Lebrun, the minister for foreign affairs, who was present, kindly promised to have it forwarded to the Duke of Brunswick. No answer was ever received.

Shortly afterwards, M. Beauchet returned to Chavaniac and advised my mother to write to the King of Prussia, and ask him for my father's release. M. Morris, the American minister in France, sent her a copy of a letter which she found too humble, and refused to transcribe[1]. She only thought herself

1. It is this letter that, by a most natural mistake,

obliged to speak to the King of Prussia of his integrity, a quality to which he at that time still pretended.

This is what she wrote:

"Sir,

"Your Majesty's well-known integrity admits of M. de Lafayette's wife addressing herself to you without forgetting what she owes to her husband's character. I have always hoped, Sir, that Your Majesty would respect virtue, wherever it was to be found, and thereby give to Europe a glorious example. It is now five long and dreadful months since I last heard anything of M. de Lafayette, so I cannot plead his cause. But it seems to me that both

the editors of M. Morris' Memoirs had printed as if it had actually been written.

his enemies and myself speak eloquently in his favour: they by their crimes, I by the violence of my despair. They prove his virtue, and how much he is feared by the wicked, I show how worthy he is of being loved. They make it a necessity for Your Majesty's glory not to have an object of persecution in common with them. Shall I myself be fortunate enough to give you the occasion of restoring me to life by delivering him?

"Allow me, Sir, to indulge in that hope as in the one of soon owing you this deep debt of gratitude.

"NOAILLES LAFAYETTE."

M. Beauchet only passed one day at Chavaniac. The accounts he brought were sad; it was the moment of the

King's trial. Soon after we heard of his condemnation and death. You may imagine the impression that fearful event produced on my mother: she was overwhelmed. The details brought by M. Beauchet respecting my grandmother and my aunt de Noailles, were most precious to her heart. At that period it was no longer safe to write by post; great difficulties in corresponding naturally ensued. It was a sad privation not to hear often from my grandmother and my aunt de Noailles; my mother suffered much from their forced silence.

M. Roland had not forgotten his promises. He had seized a favourable moment to obtain from the Committee the repeal of the order for my mother's arrest. However this liberty

which was restored to her towards the middle of December, was delusive; there still remained the *surveillance*, to which the *ci-devant* nobles were subjected: she could not leave the department without an express permission to do so. But disengaged from her promise, she was not discouraged, and worked with ardour to loosen the bonds by which she was still detained.

My mother ardently wished that her son should leave France before her. A letter from Bordeaux, written by M. Frestel, had led her to believe that my brother had embarked. Unfortunately M. Frestel, having met with too many obstacles, had returned, with George to his own relations in Normandy, but was still determined to take the first favourable moment for accomplishing

my mother's wishes. While she was thus in the most painful anxiety, owing to the dangers inseparable from such an attempt, she had to bear the sight of the affliction of my aunt, from whom she had tried to conceal George's departure, but who had unfortunately learnt the secret and had fallen into despair. They were both silent on a subject so painful, although it was always present to their thoughts. Pecuniary interests also detained my mother in France, not on her own account nor on that of her children, but because she looked upon it as a sacred duty before leaving the country to see the rights of my father's creditors acknowledged. All my aunt's property had been united with her nephew's. The first use my mother made of her freedom was to go

to the "département." There she made a declaration of her personal rights, and obtained that the interest of what was owing to her should be taken from the income of my father's property. Then she produced the creditors' claims. Personal good-will was shown towards her, but she was unable to persuade the administrators to take advantage of the power still left by the laws to pay off debts with sequestered property. All this business obliged my mother to go frequently to Le Puy. Whenever she appeared before the "département," she invariably began by protesting against the injustice of applying to my father the laws concerning the *émigrés;* then she would allow her legal adviser, the excellent M. Marthory, lawyer at Le Puy, to expose the details of her

claims and prove their justice according to the laws.

Meanwhile, M. Frestel, seeing the impossibility of leaving France, decided on bringing my brother back to Chavaniac. My mother received him with mingled feelings of pain and joy, which caused her much agitation. M. Frestel pointed out the insurmountable obstacles which had prevented him from carrying out her plans, assuring her that he was ready to recommence his attempts, provided she would furnish him with the means of doing so. Not having courage to decide on another separation, she allowed my brother to join the family. The joy felt by my sister, my aunt and myself, contrasted with my mother's anxiety, and it was only after a few

days had elapsed that she felt some comfort at seeing us all assembled around her.

M. Roland had left office. This was a great loss to my mother. She ardently wished that her business should continue to be transacted in Haute-Loire, and in a confidential letter she had represented to him that she could not employ anybody in her affairs lest her counsel should be exposed to danger. M. Garat, M. Roland's successor, decided against her; she was obliged to give up taking any further steps and to be satisfied with having her claims registered.

Always watching the opportunity of serving my father, and having read in a newspaper a letter in which kindly feelings were expressed towards the name

of Lafayette, my mother thought of writing to the author, the celebrated Klopstock. She also took advantage of the departure of two Italian plasterers, who had obtained leave to return home, and by whom she sent several letters on the same subject. She wrote, by the advice of M. Morris, to the Princess of Orange, sister to the King of Prussia. At first she was reluctant to do so on account of my father's connection with the Dutch patriots, in '87. She did not expect any sympathy from the Princess, but she wished to leave no means untried. It was in the same spirit that she wrote also to M. de Lucchesini.

No answer was received, except from the Princess of Orange. Her letter was polite, expressive of good-will, and,

without giving any positive promise, was calculated to revive her hopes, and did her real good.

Towards the end of March, Dumouriez's defection became known. On that occasion the "département" gave orders for the papers belonging to all the *ci-devant* nobles to be examined. Nothing treasonable was found in my mother's. Meanwhile the mission of the *représentant* Jean-Baptiste Lacoste gave rise to fresh uneasiness. He travelled through the whole department profusely distributing a writing composed by himself against the Girondins, in which much harm was also said of my father. At Le Puy he had given orders for the execution of two young men who had refused to submit to the *requisition*, and was heard to say, while

passing through Aurat, that my mother ought to be arrested. So as to anticipate the order of arrest, she thought it expedient to go and meet him at Brioude. He received her politely. "I have heard, Sir, she said, that it is contemplated to have all the *ci-devant* nobles imprisoned on the occasion of M. Dumouriez's defection. I declare that if I have always said how gladly I should go security for M. de Lafayette, I am by no means prepared to do so for his enemies. Besides it is equally indifferent to M. Dumouriez whether I live or die; it would be far better to leave me in my retreat. Those who last expelled me from it only excited pity in my favour, and brought back to people's minds many acts of injustice. I ask to be left with my children

in the only situation which can be bearable to me so long as their father remains the captive of France's enemies." "*Citoyenne,* answered the *représentant,* such feelings are worthy of you. — I care little, Sir, she replied, to know whether they are worthy of me; I only wish they should be worthy of him."

M. Lacoste then told her in soft-spoken words that government had only thought of issuing for the department a decree similar to the one then in force in the Ardèche, where the ex-nobles were not allowed to meet in greater numbers than three, either in public walks or private houses. This plan was not executed.

The news from Paris kept us in perpetual agitation. Fresh calamities occurred every day. The persecution of

the priests was becoming more cruel in the departments: several were killed at Le Puy, one at Brioude. The *curé* of Chavaniac was arrested in the village, but my mother did not give up the hopes of saving him. She applied to M. de Montfleury, from whom she had already received so much help, and who replied that if ever she sent him an unfortunate person to save, she would have a right to his zeal and to his gratitude. By dint of trouble and of examinations solicited by my mother, the *curé* was acquitted by a jury composed of peasants of Aurat, whose deliberation was most cleverly directed by a friend of ours, surgeon and mayor of the *commune*, M. Guitandry, who had been named secretary for the occasion. This judgment appeared

so favourable that no one at Brioude dared to execute it. My mother, under some pretence, set off immediately for that town. There she found the *curé*'s case all but lost. His friends saw no other means of saving him, but by making him take the constitutional oath. The others were frightened or ill-disposed. Finally it had been decided that the opinion of the "département" should be taken previously to setting the prisoner at liberty. Had this been done, he was lost. My mother took upon herself to delay the departure of the messenger who had to carry the consultation to Le Puy, for she apprehended the "département's" answer and she still hoped to make the "district" alter its determination. She dissuaded the kindly intentioned adminis-

trators from the idea of making the *curé* take the oath; those amongst them who were indifferent were intimidated; as for the others, they were most malevolent. To each one my mother spoke with tact and energy. The *curé* was sent back to his village. In the still more fearful times which followed this period, one of the principal charges brought against her was her conduct in this circumstance.

The events of the 31st of May, which assured the triumph of the terrorist party, brought no alteration at first in our situation, but took from us all hopes for the future.

Towards the middle of June my mother received through the minister of the United States, two letters from my father, written from the dungeon

of Magdebourg. The anxiety they occasioned with respect to my father's health marred the joy we felt in receiving them. My mother's wish to join him became more ardent than ever. Nevertheless she would not attempt to leave France without assuring my aunt's future comfort as well as the payment of several informal debts. She wrote to M. Morris, offering to transfer to him all her rights if he would undertake to settle both these matters for her. He answered in the noblest manner that he would furnish the necessary sums, adding with delicacy that he ran no risk in doing so, for, if circumstances caused him to lose what he had advanced, he knew that the Americans would hold themselves responsible. M. Beauchet settled with him the diffe-

rent periods at which the loan was to be returned. The money was appropriated to the payment of several creditors whose claims had not been acknowledged, the remainder was employed for our daily expenses which were carried on with the greatest economy. At that time the payment of all income had ceased. Our gratitude to M. Morris was proportioned to the immense service we were receiving.

At that period of the Revolution, many *émigrés*', wives thought it necessary for the preservation of their children's fortune and for their personal safety to obtain a divorce. My mother esteemed and even respected the virtue of several persons who thought themselves obliged to take this step. But as for herself, the scru-

ples of her conscience would not have allowed her to save her life by feigning an act contrary to christian law, even when no one could be deceived. However another motive influenced her, though this one would have sufficed. Her love for my father made her find pleasure in all that was a remembrance of him. Whilst many pious and tender wives sought for safety in a pretended divorce, never did she address a request to any administration whatever, or present a petition without feeling satisfaction in beginning everything she wrote by these words: *la femme Lafayette.*

The close of the summer of 1793 was greatly agitated. The resistance of Lyons gave us a slight ray of hope. My mother thought for a moment that

she could reach that town and there find the means of quitting France. But Lyons was taken, and this hope was followed by grief at hearing of all the crimes which laid waste that unfortunate city.

The sale of my father's property had been for a long time talked of. It began by the mill of Langeac; my aunt came forward to purchase it with her claim. My mother accompanied her to Brioude, where the auction was to take place. She went to the "district": "*Citoyens*, she said, I feel myself obliged to protest before the sale begins, against the enormous injustice of applying the laws on emigration to one who is at this moment the prisoner of the enemies of France. I ask you to take note of my protestation."

She was listened to with respect; several members even proposed to insert her protestation in the official report. "No, *Citoyens*, she answered, you might suffer for it, and that would truly grieve me; you must not involve yourselves into difficulties out of politeness, when you will not do so to avoid committing an act of injustice. As for me, thank God, I have never been accomplice to any; I will not be so in this case by my silence and I ask you to register my protestation in a separate note." It was decided that her request should be granted.

I am now coming, my dear children, to the painful moment when we were separated from my mother, and to the times during which our anxiety became so cruel. I wish I could have given you

a correct idea of all that she was during the period I have just been talking of; but, fully to appreciate her conduct, it would be requisite to have lived in those circumstances, and to have known her yourselves. The life we led was as sad as it was agitated. Nothing however was neglected by my mother, and she did her best to make us suffer as little as possible. She thought of everything, even of our amusements, and gave herself up to our education, as she would have done in quiet times. Of a morning, we used to walk out with her, and sitting by some brook, in vue of our beautiful mountains, we would listen to her reading aloud. I still remember how much I enjoyed those moments.

My mother's piety supported her in the midst of her afflictions. It took the

form of gentle resignation to the will of God. Assuredly she admired the enthusiasm of that saint who wished she might endure constant suffering, but these words of saint Paul, the truth of which she felt within herself, were better in harmony with the feelings of her heart: "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." The religious duties she fulfilled in common with us were a great alleviation to her sorrows. Though I was then very young, I still preserve in my heart these precious recollections. Every Sunday, she assembled together the pious women of the village to pray with them in remembrance of the holy sacrifice of mass which could no longer be celebrated. She persevered in holding these

religious meetings, though they had been the subject of several denunciations, for as she could not be accused of *aristocratie*, much was said about her religious fanaticism.

The decree of the 17th of September was the forerunner of persecutions still greater and still more general than those yet undergone. It enacted the establishment of houses of detention in the principal town of each district, in order there to confine the fathers, mothers, relations or agents of the *émigrés* as well as all the *ci-devant* nobles who had not constantly given proofs of attachment to the Revolution. Committees were formed to point out all suspected people. The *représentant* Solon Reynaud, who belonged to Le Puy, was sent down there, and formed

these committees of the most advanced Jacobins.

Everybody hastened to solicit certificates of *civisme*. My mother could have provided herself with a very good one from the municipality of Aurat, but she would not allow hers to be different from the one given to my aunt, who had insisted that very little should be said about her own patriotism. My mother therefore only received a very insignificant certificate. Each inhabitant of the *château* obtained one, but as they were useless, unless countersigned by the Revolutionary Committee, she had to take the papers to Brioude. She first presented her servants' certificates which were approved after some difficulty; but the bad feelings she remarked making her fear a refusal, if she pre-

sented my aunt's or her own, she retired without doing so.

Some days afterwards, a member of the Revolutionary Committee came to Chavaniac to sort our papers and burn those which were, to use the language of those times, "tainted by the spirit of feodal times (*entachés de féodalité*)." My mother showed her indifference at this measure in so natural a manner, that the commissary appeared surprised.

Meanwhile the whole country was in a state of despair. The *ci-devant* nobles, the *aristocrates*, and even the worthy patriots, known as having protected us, were arrested. On the 21st of Brumaire (November 12th), my mother received the intelligence that she was to be arrested on the following day. She

kept this news from us till the next morning. The hours past away in cruel expectation.

That same day, the sorting of the title-deeds was finished. All the papers were placed in a cart, as well as the busts of the King and of Mirabeau, in order to make a bonfire around which the people were to dance. But the whole had to be conveyed to Aurat, as the inhabitants of Chavaniac refused to take part in a *fête* on the day my mother was to be arrested.

M. Granchier, commissary of the Revolutionary Committee, arrived at the *château* in the evening of the same day, with a detachment of the National Guard of Paulhaguet. We all collected in my mother's room, where the order of the Committee for her arrest was read

aloud. She presented the certificate of civism given her by the "commune." M. Granchier answered that it was too old and that it was of no use, not having been countersigned by the Committee. "*Citoyen*, my sister then asked, are daughters prevented from following their mother? — Yes, Mademoiselle," answered the commissary. She insisted, adding that, being sixteen, she was included in the law. He seemed moved. To change the subject, he began relating all the arrests he had been making in the neighbourhood. He did not oblige my mother to pass the night in the church of Aurat, where he had collected all the ladies of the country. He contented himself with the promise she made of being there the next morning before nine, in order to start for

Brioude with all the suspected persons of the "canton."

My mother kept up every body's courage. She tried to persuade us that the separation would not be a long one. She communicated to those around her that hope, which she herself needed so much. The departure from Aurat took place amidst the cries of the children whose parents were thus torn from them, and of the consternation of all those who were left behind.

The jail at Brioude was already full. The newly arrived prisoners were nevertheless crammed into it. My mother found herself in the midst of all the *aristocrates* ladies with whom she had had no intercourse since the Revolution. At first they were very impertinent. It was not a moment for dwelling

on the errors of the past. So my mother felt, and she therefore sought only to avoid occasions of contact. She was happy to find place in a room which served as a passage, and where three *bourgeoises* of Brioude were already established; one of them, a baker's wife, was a very pious-minded woman. By these persons she was received in a most touching manner. However the rudeness of the other ladies was not of long duration. They soon shared in the admiration my mother inspired to all those who approached her. The society of the prison was divided into *coteries* which cordially hated each other; but for my mother every one professed attachment.

My mother soon became aware that she could do nothing for her delive-

rance, and that, to escape greater misfortunes, her best plan was to avoid attracting notice. Notwithstanding this conviction, and although she had given up asking anything for herself, the wish to be useful to those around her often made her act the part of spokeswoman to present their requests with more skill than they themselves would have employed. One day she ventured to suggest the necessity of giving more air to a sick woman confined in a small room with eleven other people. This brought down on her a volley of abuse impossible to describe. Except on this occasion, the members of the Committee showed more respect to her than to the other prisoners.

The news my mother received at that time from Paris caused her most

painful agitation. My grand mother and my aunt de Noailles, who had remained a long time at Saint-Germain, to take care of the Maréchal de Noailles in his old age, returned to Paris, after his death, anxious to attend once more to their religious duties. They were, soon after their return, put under arrest in their own house, at the Hôtel de Noailles. The danger of their situation filled my mother's mind with terror and absorbed all her thoughts. We were at Chavaniac, far from her. Childish amusements often drew my brother and myself from our painful thoughts; but my sister, who was older, was unable to receive any consolation.

My aunt de Chavaniac was put under arrest in January 1794; on account of her great age, she was allowed

to remain at Chavaniac. The commissary who had been sent to her with the sentence told her that it was grounded on her being the mother of an *émigré*. Totally indifferent as to her arrest, my aunt was only struck by the word *mother*. "*Citoyen*," she answered; "I have no longer the happiness of being a mother." Then she burst into tears which the remembrance of the daughter she had lost sixteen years before, never failed to draw from her.

We had occasional opportunities of communicating with my mother. We used to send her clean linen every week. The list was sewn on the parcel, and each time we wrote on the back of the page which nobody ever thought of unsewing. She would answer us in the same way. But this mode of cor-

respondence was not safe enough to be employed in giving any other details than those concerning our health. The innkeeper's daughter, a child of thirteen, sometimes managed, when carrying the prisoners' dinner, to approach my mother. Blows, abuse of language, all was indifferent to that courageous girl, so that she could succeed in beholding my mother, and in letting us know that she was in good health.

In the course of January (1794), we found out that it was not impossible to bribe the jailor and to gain admission into the prison. M. Frestel undertook the negotiation which was not without danger. He succeeded. It was settled that he would take one of us every fortnight to Brioude. My sister was the first to go. She started on horseback

in the night, remained the whole of the following day with the good *auberg*iste, already mentioned as devoted to us, and spent the night with my mother. But when daylight came, they were obliged to tear themselves from each other. My sister brought back joy in the midst of us with the details of this happy meeting. We had, each in our turn, the same satisfaction. Sometimes an obstacle would occur and thus render the journey useless. I was only once taken to Brioude.

About that time the sale of my father's property was resumed. My mother, who thought her presence might be useful, begged permission to assist at the sale, guarded if necessary by armed men. M. Frestel undertook to carry her request to Le Puy, where he had

recourse to the *président* Reynaud. He was obliged to listen to torrents of abuse against my father, *whose bowels*, the *citoyen* Solon Reynaud said, *he should like to tear out*, against my mother, whom he accused of being *the arrogance of the Noailles personified;* against ourselves, who were, he said, *serpents the Republic nurtured in her bosom*. Naturally my mother's request was refused. M. Frestel returned, his mind filled with the most melancholy forebodings.

The citoyen Solon Reynaud left the department shortly after. This, at first, seemed to us a relief; we were mistaken: his presence in Paris did us great harm. He was replaced by the *représentant* Guyardin, who, it was said, was less violent. He was wont to

praise republican simplicity, and as a proof wore in his button-hole a wooden knife and spoon.

My mother's health bore up as well as her fortitude. She was the comfort of those who surrounded her, ever seeking to be of service to her companions. Thinking she might be useful to some infirm women, amongst whom was a nun who was nearly blind, she proposed to them to have their meals with her. She contrived to persuade them that they were contributing to the common expense, when nearly all the cost fell upon herself. It was she also who cooked for them. The prison life was most wearisome. The room in which she slept with five or six people was only separated by a screen from the public passage. The quarrels be-

tween people of different *coteries* who were confined together, were a continual cause of annoyance.

But my mother soon became absorbed by one only thought and plunged in the deepest affliction. She learnt that my grandmother, my aunt and the Maréchale de Noailles had been transferred to the Luxembourg.

It was towards the end of May, on the 8th of Prairial, I believe, when the order to convey my mother to the prison of La Force, in Paris, reached Brioude. M. Gissaguer, brother to M. de Montfleury, then confined in the prison, being still Captain in the *Gendarmerie*, was charged with the execution of this measure. He went to my mother, and without having the strength

to speak, he showed her the order of the Committee of General Safety. Those who were present manifested the greatest anxiety. "It is not before the Revolutionary Tribunal I am called, she said; *I am merely transferred to Paris.*" Then she went up to M. de Montfleury's room to decide upon what she was to do.

M. Gissaguer, who, on account of his brother, was particularly devoted to her, said the order bore that she was to be conducted from brigade to brigade, but to spare her that annoyance, he proposed to accompany her by travelling post. "Sir, said my mother, do you think it is possible I should find the means of escaping on the way? I should not wish to expose either yourself or your brother to whom

I owe my life[1]. If not, I accept your offer."

M. Gissaguer assured her that all attempt at escape would be impracticable; then she decided on going with him, and wrote to us. Afterwards the thought of attempting to regain her freedom, before M. Gissaguer's responsibility commenced, crossed her mind, but the fear of drawing down further severities on her fellow-prisoners made her give up all such plans.

My mother obtained that her departure should be delayed for twenty-four hours. The next morning, after having

1. The reader has seen that M. de Montfleury, while presiding the council of the department, at the time of her first arrest, had prevented my mother from being transferred to Paris. (*Note by Mme de Lasteyrie.*)

despatched a messenger to us, she made her confession to the "curé" of Chavaniac who was prisoner in the same house. That good priest was less able to listen than she was to speak. After her confession, she went up to the garret where the nuns of Brioude were confined, and composed her wearied spirit by praying with them. She was then transferred to the common jail in order there to await the arrival of M. Frestel who would not have been allowed admittance into the other prison.

You may fancy our despair when we received, on waking, my mother's letter. The messenger had been delayed and it was to be feared that she was no longer at Brioude. M. Frestel set off immediately. He took none of us

with him so as not to impede his journey. He was bearer of all the small jewellery possessed by the members of the household who had given them to be sold in order to avoid my mother's being conveyed in a cart from brigade to brigade.

On arriving at Brioude, M. Frestel found universal consternation, even amongst the Jacobins. He easily obtained a delay of twenty-four hours. We soon joined him at the prison. We found my mother in a room by herself, but fetters were placed near the pallet upon which she had thrown herself to seek a little repose. It was decided that M. Frestel should follow my mother's carriage and proceed to M. Morris' country residence, near Melun, in the hopes that the American

minister, owing to his official position, would be enabled to take some steps in her behalf. The violence of my sister's despair was fearful to witness. Owing to M. Frestel's entreaties, she obtained from my mother leave to follow her and to accompany him in order to implore the aid of the American minister. She then passed from the deepest grief to the wildest joy. It seemed to her that my mother was not going, as she was going with her. She only remained a short time at the prison and left us to go to Le Puy for the purpose of obtaining a permit to travel out of the department. She was to join my mother on the way.

My brother and I remained in the horrible room in which my mother was confined. We all three offered up our

prayers to God. My mother charged George with several messages for my aunt. That day, at least, misfortune had made us both quite rational.

At twelve o'clock, M. Gissaguer entered the room and said it was time to depart. My mother gave her last instructions to George and to myself, and made us promise to seek and to seize upon every means of joining my father. She grieved at seeing us undergo so young such cruel misfortunes.

My sister passed that day at Le Puy. In spite of innumerable obstacles she succeeded in seeing the *citoyen* Guyardin. She conjured him to have an inquiry made with respect to my mother's conduct and to forward it to Paris. He did not move, remained seated at his

bureau and continued writing while she was addressing him in the most urgent manner. He refused to read a letter from my mother presented to him by Anastasie, saying that he could not trouble himself about a prisoner who was summoned to Paris, and adding most vulgar jokes to his refusal. My unfortunate sister left the room in a most violent state of despair and indignation. The cruel Guyardin did not grant her the necessary permission to travel out of the department and to follow my mother's carriage. She returned immediately to Aurat, where the municipality gave her for my mother the certificate of *civisme* which she thought it might be useful to have. It spoke in the strongest and most touching terms of the good wishes formed for her by the

inhabitants. But the municipality declared that it could not grant a passport to a *ci-devant noble*, and my poor sister, in despair, was obliged to let M. Frestel set off without her. She was brought back to Chavaniac overwhelmed with grief. As for M. Frestel, there scarcely remained time for him to join my mother at Melun. He had his passport countersigned in all haste at the "district." "He is going, said one of the administrators, to be the officious advocate of those who ought not to have any. — I wish, he answered, I had the necessary talent, and I am sure that many, even in this hall, would envy me."

My mother bore the journey well, and no event occurred on the road. But the more she approached Paris, the less

she met with kind feelings. At Fontainebleau, the mob gathered round her carriage, and most atrocious remarks were passed. On the way, my mother avoided speaking to her companion of her situation. She feared to dwell upon that which might have tempted him to escape with her, and thus endanger the life of his captive brother. She saw that his resolution was shaken, and, as she thought of us, she felt that, if he proposed to save her, she would not have the courage to resist. She therefore determined to say nothing which could add to his irresolutions. It was only when they got near Paris that they confessed to each other what had been the subject of their thoughts.

M. Frestel joined my mother at Melun. M. Gissaguer retired so as to al-

low her a moment of private conversation; after which M. Frestel left her to go to M. Morris, the American minister.

My mother availed herself of the time she remained at Melun to write to each of us. The longest letter was for Anastasie. She said that she had to muster all her strength in order to write to her and to entreat her to forgive, from the bottom of her heart, all those who had refused her the consolation of coming to Paris.

My mother arrived in Paris on the 19th of Prairial, the eve of the *fête de l'Être suprême*, three days before the decree of the 22nd, which organized *une terreur dans la Terreur*. At that time, no less than sixty people were daily falling victims of the Revolutio-

nary Tribunal. All seemed to forebode approaching death to my mother. Her guide in despair could not overcome his grief. She was obliged to remind him that, after having brought her so far, it would be folly to expose himself uselessly. After leaving her at La Petite-Force, he went to M. Beauchet with a message from my mother, the purport of which was that, although she had hitherto accepted all his kind offices, she now forbade him and all her friends to take any steps in her behalf. This did not prevent Mme Beauchet from going every other day to make inquires at the door of the prison, in order to write us word whether she was still there.

You may fancy the anguish of mind in which we spent the two months

which followed my mother's departure for Paris. We were daily expecting to hear of the greatest misfortune which could befall us. Towards that time, the *château* of Chavaniac and the furniture were sold. My aunt bought back her bed with a few necessary articles. Her brother's picture was taken from her, and she was thus deprived of what had been her comfort since she had lost him at the battle of Minden[1].

The peasants of the "commune" brought us with hearty good-will all that was necessary for our subsistence; until M. Frestel's return, we had lived on the money lent to my aunt with touching eagerness by the people of the village. Every day it was reported

1. The Marquis de Lafayette, *colonel des grenadiers de France*, and father to the General.

that she and my sister were to be sent to the prison of Brioude, whilst my brother and myself were to be taken to the hospital.

As for my mother, the life she was leading at la Petite-Force was dreadful. She met with some worthy people amongst her fellow-prisoners, but was totally deprived of every sort of comfort. It was there she heard of the horrors committed each day and which surpassed all that she had imagined. She was prepared to run the greatest dangers owing to her name, but she did not know that all the prisoners were indistinctly sent to the guillotine one after the other. She trembled for those who were so dear to her and whom she knew were confined at the Luxembourg. She did not venture to have

any intercourse with them, fearing that, by making their relationship known, she might add to the danger of their situation.

At the end of a fortnight, my mother was transferred to *Le Plessis*. This building, formerly a college in which my father had been educated, had been turned into a prison. She there found her cousin, the Duchesse de Duras, whom she had scarcely met since the Revolution, on account of the violence of her political opinions. She was however received by her in the most affectionate manner, and during those horrible times there sprung up between them feelings which lasted ever after. My mother had been two days at *Le Plessis*, when it became known that the Maréchal and Maréchale de Mou-

chy had perished on the scaffold. My mother was asked to break this cruel intelligence to their daughter. She had a similar task to perform with regard to a most interesting young woman, Mme de Caradeuc, M. de La Chalotais' daughter-in-law, whose husband was executed at that time.

Since the law of the 22nd of *Prairial,* the Revolutionary Tribunal sent each day sixty persons to the scaffold. One of the buildings of Le Plessis served as a depot to the Conciergerie, so every morning twenty prisoners could be seen departing for the guillotine. « The thought of soon being one of the victims, my mother wrote, makes one endure such a sight with more firmness. » Twice she fancied that she was being called to take her place amongst

the victims. She inhabited at *Le Plessis* a small garret, on the fifth floor where she had the advantage of being alone. When she felt her strength failing, she would revive it by repeating with faith these first words of the Belief : *I believe in God the Father Almighty*. During her confinement at Le Plessis, she made a will from which I extract the following passages.

"O Lord, Thou hast been my help and my strength in the fearful troubles which have befallen me ; Thou art my God; all the events of my life are in Thy hands, come to my help; do not forsake me, and I shall fear nothing, even in the midst of the shadows of death.

"I have always lived, and hope, with the grace of God, to die in the

bosom of the catholic, apostolic and Roman Church. I declare that it is in the principles of that holy religion that I have found my support, and in its practices my consolation. I have full confidence that it will bear me up at the moment of my death. I believe in Thee, O my God, in all Thou hast revealed to Thy Church; I put my hope in all that Thou hast promised, and my full confidence in the merits of Jesus-Christ and in the price of His blood. My wish is to conform my life to His, to unite my sufferings to His sufferings, and my death to His death. I hope, O God, I may always love Thee beyond everything, and attain, by Thy grace, the bliss of loving Thee eternally. I accept unreservedly the means Thy providence may

choose to lead me to that blessed end.

"I pardon with all my heart my enemies, if I have any, my persecutors, whomsoever they may be, and even the persecutors of those I love. I pray God to grant them His blessings, and to pardon them, as I pardon them myself. O Lord, when by the means of Thy grace I pray for my persecutors as sincerely as I now do, Thou wilt not reject my prayers for those whom I love, and thou wilt treat us according to the greatness of Thy mercy. Have pity on me, O my God!

"I declare that I have never ceased to be faithful to my country, that I have never shared in any political intrigue which could disturb its peace, that my most sincere wishes are for its

happiness, that the principles of my attachment to it are immovable, and that no persecution can shake them, from whatever side they may come. An example most dear to my heart sets me the example of these feelings.

"I give my tenderest blessing to my children, and I pray God, at the price of my life, which I should have wished to devote to their happiness, that He may Himself bring about that happiness by making them worthy of Him.

"It is in the name of Jesus-Christ that I pray for all these blessings. Filled with confidence in Thy loving kindness, I deliver up my dear children, I deliver up my soul into Thy hands. I know, my God, that it is to Thee I

have intrusted those who were committed to my charge, and that Thou art powerful enough to restore them to me on the great day of Eternity and to unite us all in a place where we may bless Thee for ever. In Thee, and in Thee alone, I have put my trust. Have mercy on me, O God!"

My mother passed fifty days at La Force and at Le Plessis, expecting death at every moment. She remained unaware of her personal losses, although it was the custom to cry out near the prisons the list of the victims of each day. Mme de Duras and she were both kept in ignorance of the death of my grandmother and of my aunt de Noailles, who had been sent to the scaffold on the 4th of Thermidor with the Maréchale de Noailles, my grand-

father's mother : the three generations perished together.

In the midst of the tumult caused by the revolution of the 10th of Thermidor, it was for a moment believed that fresh massacres would take place in the prisons; but soon afterwards the news of Robespierre's death reached the captives, and it became known to them that the executions of the Revolutionary Tribunal had ceased. My mother's first thought was to send to the Luxembourg, and as she even then feared to endanger persons so dear to her and whom she still believed were confined there, it was Mme de Duras who wrote the letter. The jailor's answer revealed to her the fearful truth. How can I, my dear children, give you an idea of my mother's des-

pair? She sought in her letters to make us hope that we should be a comfort to her, but at first she did not believe it possible for her ever to receive any. "Return thanks to God, she wrote to us later, for having preserved my strength, my life, my reason; do not regret that you were far from me. God kept me from revolting against Him, but for a long time I could not have borne the slightest appearance of human comfort."

Her submission to the will of that God, who had called to Him those pious victims, was complete. She made frequent use of the Psalms and no one ever felt their beauty more than she did. She had procured at Le Plessis a small Psalm book, all in Latin. Although ignorant of that language, she was

so well acquainted with the church service that this book, the only one she possessed, was to her of the greatest ressource. It was in that book that her heart, blighted by tortures of all kinds, found words for expressing to God her wants and ours. While reading that little volume her strength would revive. "Often, she wrote to us, I find in it the sentiments of those who are gone, the thoughts I should wish you to have, those I pray God to put in my heart, and which he has sometimes granted me."

For some time after the 10th of Thermidor, the prisoners still considered themselves as being between life and death. The massacres had ceased but they might be renewed, and the impression of terror yet remained deep

in every heart. As for my mother, she was absorbed in her grief. In a letter to my brother, she wrote *that the thought of following in footsteps so dear would have taken from the horror of so awful an end.*

The new Committee of General Safety, composed of *Thermidoriens*, commissioned, towards the end of Fructidor (September), the *représentants* Bourdon de l'Oise and Legendre, to visit the prison of Le Plessis, and to decide the fate of the prisoners. All were set at liberty. Some objection was made to Mme de Duras' release, but Legendre declared that she might well be an *aristocrate* after all the misfortunes she had undergone. On that remark she was dismissed with the rest of the prisoners. My mother ap-

peared the last; no one ventured to proclaim who she was, and it was she herself who pronounced the name she was ever proud to bear. The *représentants* declared that her husband had too evidently betrayed his country for them to take upon themselves to decide her fate, and that she must send her papers to the Committee. She begged the commissaries would undertake to carry these papers as she knew no one to whom she could intrust them. "When you were surrounded by your aid-de-camps, said Legendre, it was not thus you spoke; you were more insolent then."

My mother was too much absorbed in her grief to feel acutely her prolonged captivity; but she thought of her children, and concealed as best

she could the result of the commissaries' visit, so as to leave us some hope. Her wish was to quit France with us as soon as she could be released from prison. M. Monroe, the new American minister, came with his wife to visit my mother. He sollicited her release with perseverance, but his efforts were unsuccessful.

As the number of prisoners detained on suspicion had decreased, most of the temporary jails had resumed their former destination, and Le Plessis was appropriated to the purpose of receiving the accused who were awaiting their trial. My mother, overwhelmed with grief, would not sue for a change of prison; she was nevertheless transferred to the rue des Amandiers, and from thence to the rue Notre-Dame

des Champs. In the first of these houses she found herself the only woman with twenty West-Indian settlers. When she arrived, they showed her great ill-will on account of her zeal for the liberation of the blacks, but they did not long resist the impression she always produced, and they left the prison professing the greatest admiration for her; it seemed as if her captivity had been prolonged, that she might receive a tribute of praise from men of the most opposed and even of the most criminal parties. Her former companions in misfortune were replaced each day by the friends of the odious government which had just fallen. She was for some time confined with Saint-Just's tutor, who spoke with pride of his pupil; then, with the pro-

secutor of the "Tribunal d'Orange," celebrated amongst others for the atrocities it had committed; she received, there as elsewhere, tokens of respect from all. Her physical sufferings were great during the severe winter of 1794 to 1795. The prisoners took their meals in a large hall without any fire and had scarcely any in their rooms; everything was frozen in the cell occupied by my mother who always suffered especially from cold. During the four months she passed in the maison Delmas, rue Notre Dame des Champs, she received frequent visits from M. Carrichon, the holy priest who had accompanied my grandmother and my aunt to the foot of the scaffold, who had given them absolution, and had witnessed their sacrifice. He had pre-

viously, during their detention at the Hôtel de Noailles, administered to them the consolations of religion; he now came to perform the same duty for my mother. You can imagine all she felt on hearing the admirable details he gave her of the last moments of those angelic women. M. Carrichon easily obtained admittance as a carpenter into the house. My mother availed herself of these visits to make a general confession. The necessity of recalling to mind her smallest faults, which incessantly brought back to her the only thought which could give her support and fix her attention, was really of use to her and soothed the anguish of her soul.

Meanwhile the endeavours to obtain her release were incessant. The Ameri-

can minister continued indefatigable in his exertions. Mme Beauchet went continually to the *citoyen* Colombel, reporter for the Committee, who each time found a fresh cause for delay. At last the members of the Committee became favourably inclined, with the exception of Legendre, who still refused his signature which was necessary for her liberation. Mme de Duras went to see him during his toilet. She reminded him of her obligations towards him, adding that my mother had undergone as many misfortunes as she had, and had therefore the same rights. He promised to oppose no longer the order for her release, which was in consequence signed on the 2nd of Pluviose[1].

1. January 22, 1795.

My mother's first care was to go and thank M. Monroe for all he had done in her behalf. She asked him to complete his work by obtaining a passport for herself and her family. She would not separate herself from her daughters, and the only object she had in view was for us all three to join my father. But before leaving France, she wished to make every arrangement for her son. She could neither leave him in France nor take him to Germany, in the midst of his father's enemies. She decided on sending him to America.

On leaving prison, my mother experienced great comfort at once more seeing her aunt, Mme de Ségur, who lived at Chatenay, a few leagues from Paris. The most affectionate welcome

awaited her, and there, as elsewhere, she was able to be of use. She found young Laure de Ségur in a state of religious excitement. She calmed her mind, obtained for her the comforts of religion, after which she was longing, and gave her useful and affectionate advice. Mme de Ségur's society was of much good to my mother; her gentle manners, which added still more sweetness to a lovely face, brought quiet and repose wherever she was present. This visit restored comparative calm to my mother's agitated mind. "My aunt has revived, my mother wrote, in my blighted existence a great and tender interest."

It was six days after she had left prison, that George joined my mother, who had sent for him. So great was

her fear of exposing her friends, that she did not venture to let him come to Mme de Ségur's. She therefore gave him a rendez-vous at the house of two old *Jansénistes* ladies at Chilly, near Chatenay. Father Lambert, formerly a Dominican, who was very much attached to her, was concealed in that house. On seeing my brother, on finding him so exactly what she wished him to be, her feelings of joy were stronger than she had thought it possible ever again to experience. "I feel, she said, a consolation so deep, so far greater than what I had expected, that I enjoy it more completely than any happiness which may yet be in store for me."

My mother longed to see my sister and me, but she would not leave Paris

before having obtained for my brother a passport for America. Knowing that my father's wish would be to send him to the United States, she did not hesitate to make the sacrifice of separating herself from George. M. de Ségur introduced her to M. Boissy d'Anglas, a very influential member of the new Committee of Public Safety, whose object was to do as much good as lay in his power. He obtained a passport for my brother under the name of Motier, and made his colleagues sign it without their knowing whom it was for. M. Frestel was equally provided with one, but, in order to avoid suspicion, it was decided that they should not travel together, that M. Russell, citizen of Boston, should take George to Le

Havre, and embark him on a small vessel on board of which even his name should be kept secret. My mother decided that before naming himself he was to await M. Frestel's arrival, under the care of M. Russel's father. She did not wish him to be known in the United States till he had a guide to direct him. Then only my brother was to visit General Washington, to whom she wrote the following letter.

"Sir,

"I send you my son. Although I have not had the consolation of being listened to nor of obtaining from you those good offices which I thought likely to bring about his father's delivery from the hands of our

enemies, because your views were different from mine, nevertheless my reliance on your kindness is not diminished, and it is with the deepest and most sincere confidence that I put my dear child under the protection of the United States, which he has ever been accustomed to look upon as his second country, and which I myself have always considered as being our future home under the special protection of their President, with whose feelings towards his father I am well acquainted.

"The person who accompanies George has been, since our misfortunes, our support, our protector, our comfort, and my son's guide. My desire is that he should continue to direct him, that, until his arrival, my son should remain privately in M.

Russell's house, that, once united, they should never separate, and that we may have some day the happiness of meeting all together in the land of liberty. To the noble efforts of that friend, my children owe the preservation of their mother's life. Notwithstanding all the perils he encountered on his way, he made known to M. Morris the horrible situation I was in, and, after having had the courage to traverse the whole of France in those times of horror, following a prisoner, who was to all appearances devoted to death, he animated the zeal of the American minister to whose applications I probably owe that my sacrifice was deferred until the revolution of the 10th of Thermidor. He will tell you that I

have never given a pretext for any accusation against me, that my country can reproach me with nothing, and I myself will tell you that it is near him and with him that my son invariably learnt, even in the depth of misery, to discern between liberty and the horrors to which its name has been associated. While receiving from him each day the examples of the most generous virtues, his heart was being formed for those noble feelings which have preserved and always will, I hope, preserve in his soul, the love of a country where such dear victims have been sacrificed, where his father is disowned and persecuted, and where his mother was during sixteen months confined in prison. The last sacrifice which this friend

has made for us is that of separating himself from a family he dearly loves. I ardently wish M. Washington to know what he is, and how much we are indebted to him. A letter will very insufficiently fulfil my object. When shall I be able to do so myself?

"My wish is that my son should lead a very secluded life in America, that he should resume his studies interrupted by three years of misfortunes, and that, far from the land where so many events are taking place which might either dishearten or revolt him, he may become fit to fulfil the duties of a citizen of the United States whose feelings and whose principles will always agree with those of a French citizen.

"I shall not say anything here of my

own position, nor of the one which interests me still more than mine. I rely upon the bearer of this letter to interpret the feelings of my heart, too withered to express any others but those of the gratitude I owe to MM. Monroe, Skypwith and Mountflorence for their kindness and their useful endeavours in my behalf.

"I beg M. Washington will accept the assurance, etc.,

"NOAILLES LAFAYETTE"

It can easily be imagined how cruelly my mother suffered on separating herself from her son and on sending him at fourteen, alone, amongst strangers, two thousand leagues off. But such would have been my father's wish, and she found strength in that thought.

My mother, after having bid farewell to George, had nothing more to keep her in Paris. She started for Auvergne intending to remain there a week. We went to meet her as far as Vaire, a charming village at three leagues from Clermont. You may fancy the ecstasy of our joy on seeing her. She was kind enough to partake in it herself so as to give us the hope that her happiness was greater than we could have dared to expect. The following day was a Sunday; holy service having been resumed in a few places, we went to hear mass celebrated in a small hamlet, called Montout, situated in the mountains at about one league from Vaire. We returned thanks to God, and then proceeded to Chavaniac. My mother was not able to

remain there more than a week. All the ardour of her zeal to join my father, and all her energy to attain that end was necessary to tear herself from my aunt and to leave her alone after so many years of suffering spent with us and for us. The moment of separation was most painful.

My mother met on the way with a consolation she did not expect. Her sister, Mme de Grammont, who had not money enough to travel post and who would not venture in public carriages, where she was afraid of finding herself in company with *terroristes*, had been on foot to Paris with her husband in the hopes of meeting her. M. and Mme de Grammont had both come from Franche-Comté, and not finding her in Paris, had proceeded

on their way to Auvergne. They joined us at Brioude. This meeting, after so many losses, was heart-rending. We continued our journey with these dear companions, half on foot, half in my mother's cabriolet.

The events of the 1st of Prairial were then taking place. On account of the agitated state of Paris we could not hope to conclude any private business. My mother had resolved to emigrate if the Jacobins had the upper hand, if not, she was determined to continue the attempt of obtaining a passport, so as to leave nothing undone for the preservation of the property which still remained in her possession. We stayed three weeks at Clermont to await the result of the contest. My mother employed that

time in preparing me for my first communion, after which we started for Paris with some hope.

The glory M. Boissy d'Anglas had acquired in preserving France from the return of the reign of terror, had given him an influence which M. de Ségur turned to account for the success of my mother's requests. She was some time before obtaining the passport she so much wished for. While she was applying for it, she also settled her family affairs. She went to Fontenay and to Lagrange, and succeeded in taking possession for herself and for her joint heirs of these estates which had been my grandmother's, and which were restored to the family by a decree giving back their property to the

heirs of those who had been condemned to death. She employed her time, notwithstanding the general want of money, in preparing the execution of part of the charitable bequests contained in my grandmother's will. She settled the affairs of my aunt who had just bought back Chavaniac from its purchasers. M. de Grammont sold part of his wife's diamonds so as to pay off at once what was necessary. My mother also provided for all those who depended upon her for their maintenance.

All these affairs, and especially her ardent wish to obtain a passport, compelled her to go frequently from Fontenay to Paris; it was on foot that she was in the habit of performing part of these journeys. Her health and her

activity were adequate to her fatigues. She also passed a great part of her time in devout exercises, which afforded great comfort to her ardent faith. This is perhaps the time during which she followed up most assiduously the practices of religion. Left entirely to herself, restrained by no duty, she would frequently go and weep in the oratories where the victims who had just been sacrificed had so often edified the assistants by their piety, or in the devastated churches just opened again to public worship.

At last my mother's passport was granted. She had provided for everything, and could therefore give herself up to the joy of having succeeded in her attempts. All her actions, all her thoughts since my father's depar-

ture had tended to find the means of joining him.

This passport was for America. We could not have obtained one for Germany; it was therefore necessary to embark somewhere. We started immediately for Dunkirk and embarked, September 5th, on a small American vessel bound for Hamburg. At the end of eight days we landed at Altona, near Hamburg. Mme de Montagu was living there with her aunt, Mme de Tessé, who, having been suddenly apprized of my mother's arrival, hastened to the inn where we had just arrived. Mme de Montagu's friends attempted in vain to prepare her for the meeting; the violence of her emotion was fearful to witness; this scene is still present to

my mind. After such great misfortunes, it was truly a consolation for the two sisters to find themselves once more together, to weep, to pray together, and to seek to give each other strength and courage[1].

My mother received many visits from the *émigrés* who were quartered at Harburg, near Altona. To several she was able to give an account of their families, and many informations to those who came to see her with the curiosity excited by the arrival of a person from France. Although the *émigrés*' conduct towards my father might have inspired her with bitterness, she did not show the slightest

1. The details of this painful meeting are related in the Life of Mme de Montagu.

trace of resentment. It is inconceivable to have loved so much, and never to have felt, in any circumstance, the slightest bitterness of feeling against those who calumniated and persecuted the object of all her affections. She viewed the conduct of those who had most wronged her with indulgent impartiality, and in the course of her troubled life, this disposition never altered.

Notwithstanding the inexpressible happiness she felt in being with her sister, my mother only remained at Altona the time necessary for obtaining her passport from M. Parish, the American consul at Hamburg. She wished to proceed to Vienna under the name of Motier, citizen of Harford, in Connecticut, one of the states

in which my father and his family were naturalized. We started with a French servant who spoke German. It was not only necessary that our name should be kept secret, we had also to conceal our nationality as no French person was allowed to enter Austria.

It was after many difficulties and anxieties that we arrived at Vienna. My mother was recommended to M. de Cobentzel's sister, the Comtesse de Rumbeck, an excellent and amiable person, who always took pleasure in being of use, and who was charming on this occasion. According to her advice, my mother applied to the old Prince de Rosemberg, Grand Chamberlain, who had formerly had some intercourse with the Noailles. She did

not confide to him who she was until she had been introduced under the name of Motier. He was moved by her appeal, and obtained for her an audience of the Emperor, unknown to his ministers. We accompanied her; she was received with politeness, and simply asked for permission to share my father's captivity. The Emperor answered: « I grant it you; as for his liberty, that would be impossible, my hands are tied. » To the expression of her gratitude for the favour she had just obtained, my mother added that the wives of my father's friends imprisoned with him at Olmütz would envy her happiness. He replied: « They have only to act like you. I shall do the same for them. » My mother said that she had heard of several vexations in use

in the Prussian prisons, and she begged the Emperor to allow her to address herself directly to him for the requests she might have to make. He answered : « I consent. But you will find M. de Lafayette well fed and well treated. I hope you will do me justice. Your presence will give him *fresh* satisfaction. Any how you will be pleased with the commanding officer. In jail the prisoners are only distinguished by their number, but as for your husband, his name is well known. »

My mother left the audience-chamber in an ecstasy of joy. She was obliged to pass eight days more at Vienna to hasten the despatch of the order which was to give her admittance into the prison. During that time, she visited Mmes de Windischgratz and d'Ursel,

relations to Mme Auguste d'Aremberg[1], the dearest friend she had out of her own family. She received from these ladies the most touching marks of affection. Sometimes she reproached herself for thinking only of her own happiness and for not working in view of my father's liberation. She thought, before leaving Vienna, that she ought to pay a visit to M. de Thugut, prime minister.

It was the time of the exchange of the Princess of France[2] for the *Conventionnels* deputies who had been taken prisoners by Austria. She forbore representing the inconsistency of detaining captive he who had been proscribed for

1. The Comtesse Auguste de La Marck then bore that name.

2. The Duchesse d'Angoulême.

having defended Louis XVI, while those who had voted his death were set free. She would have reproached herself for saying an unfavourable word concerning a prisoner. M. de Thugut received my mother with constrained politeness. Each of his expressions showed a feeling of hatred towards my father which he did not succeed in dissembling. She felt still more than ever what gratitude she owed to M. de Rosémberg who had, unknown to the ministers, obtained an audience from the Emperor. She remained convinced that, unless unforeseen circumstances occurred, my father's liberation would not for a long time be obtained.

At last, after many delays, the order for admitting my mother into the prison of Olmütz was delivered to her by

M. de Ferraris, minister of war. He told her at the same time that he thought it his duty to advise her to reflect on the course she was taking, to warn her that she would be most uncomfortable, and that the prison life she was going to lead might have serious consequences for her and for her daughters. My mother did not even listen to him, and we set off immediately.

We arrived on the second day after our departure, at eleven o'clock in the morning, in one of those open carriages which are to be found in every post-house, our own having been broken on the way. Never shall I forget the moment when the post boy pointed out to us in the distance the steeples

11. October 1795.

of Olmütz. My mother's emotion is still present to my mind. She was for some time choked with tears, but, as soon as she recovered the power of speech, she blessed God by these words of Tobit's prayer:

«Blessed be God that liveth for ever, and blessed be His kingdom. For He doth scourge, and hath mercy: He leadeth down to hell, and bringeth up again; neither is there any that can avoid His hand. Confess Him before the Gentiles, ye children of Israel: for He hath scattered us among them. There declare His greatness, and extol Him before all the living; for He is our Lord, and He is the God our Father for ever. And He will scourge us for our iniquities, and will have mercy again, and will gather us out of all nations,

among whom He has scattered us! Therefore, see what He will do with you, and confess Him with your whole mouth, and praise the Lord of might and extol the Everlasting King. Let my soul bless God the great King. »

We drove to the house of the commander of the town, but we did not see him. He sent the officer in charge of the prison to conduct us. After having been admitted through the first door which was locked on the guard itself, we arrived, by passing through several long passages, to the two padlocked doors of my father's room. « I cannot fancy, my mother wrote on the eve of this happy meeting, how one can go through what is awaiting us to-morrow. »

My father had not been informed of our arrival. Three years of captivity, the

last of which had been passed in complete solitude, for, since the attempt at escape[1], he had not even seen his servant; continual anxiety with respect to all the objects of his affection, sufferings of every kind, had deeply impaired his health; he was fearfully altered. My mother was struck with the change, but nothing could diminish the rapture of her joy, save the bitterness of her irreparable losses. My father, after the first moment of happiness, caused by this unexpected meeting, dared not make any inquiries. He knew there had been a reign of terror in France,

1. An attempt at escape was made by MM. Bollmann, Hanoyarian, and Huger, American citizen; it did not succeed. These generous minded men were condemned to six months hard labour, and General Lafayette was watched more strictly than ever. (See vol. IV of the *Mémoires*).

but he had not learnt the names of the victims. The day passed by without his venturing to make any question; my mother had not courage enough to break the subject herself. It was only in the evening, after we had been locked up in an adjoining, but separate room, which had been assigned to my sister and to myself, that she told my father that her grandmother, her mother and her sister had perished on the scaffold.

You know the details of our captivity at Olmütz; you know how my mother shared in all its hardships[1]. All communications with MM. de Maubourg and de Pusy, who never sepa-

1. See for the hardships of the captivity the long letter of Mme de Lafayette to Mme de Tessé, dated May 10th, 1796, in the vol. IV of the *Mémoires*.

rated their cause from my father's, were forbidden. We were not allowed to hear mass, though it was celebrated in a church contiguous to our prison. We had not the slightest intercourse with the outside. The doors were only opened for the officer's visit, at meal time. We were refused a woman for household work. On entering the prison, we were asked for our purses, and three silver forks, found in our luggage, were seized. The use of a knife and fork was refused us, and we were obliged during the whole time to eat with our fingers. My mother applied to the authorities on all these subjects as often as she deemed it advisable. But all her requests were refused. The following is her correspondence with M. de Ferraris, minister of war, whom

she had seen at Vienna, at his sisters'-in-law, Mmes de Windischgratz and d'Ursel.

December 14th 1795.

"The Major having brought me for the second time a pen and ink, the first to answer my father, the second my aunt and my sisters, whose letters have at last been delivered to me, I think it my duty, Monsieur le Comte, to take this opportunity of renewing a request made three days after my arrival, viz: leave to attend mass with my daughters. It has never appeared to me that this request could be thought unreasonable, but you would give me great pleasure by sending me a favourable answer before Christmas. You will have been, I suppose, solicited to grant us leave to see our two friends by Mme de

Windischgratz to whom, according to my promise, I wrote the first time I was provided with the means of doing so. This is also a question of the deepest interest to me. How much could I say were I to speak of my too well founded anxieties with respect to M. de Lafayette's health! But the hope of soon seeing him free, for freedom would be the best remedy, makes me defer dwelling longer on that subject.

« Pardon my importunity, and receive, Monsieur le Comte, etc.

« NOAILLES LAFAYETTE. »

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M. DE FERRARIS' ANSWER.

Vienna, December 27th 1795.

« Madame la Marquise,

« I have this moment received the

letter you did me the honor of writing to me on the 14th of this month, I am utterly unaware to whom you addressed the request to hear mass at Olmütz. I have not myself the means of complying with your desire, notwithstanding my wish to do so. I can only observe that, as you have consented to share your husband's lot, it will not be possible for you to obtain any change in your situation.

« Receive, Madame la Marquise, the assurance of the respectful feelings, etc. »

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SECOND LETTER FROM MY MOTHER.

« I have the honor to thank you, Monsieur le Comte, for your civility in

answering my letter as soon as it was allowed to reach you. I am also very grateful for the regret you express at not being able to grant my requests. I had made them to the Commander of Olmütz, because His Imperial Majesty had told me that it was to him I was to apply. I had put them in writing, having no means of seeing him. I asked: 1° to go to mass, for it is my duty to do all that lies in my power to attend divine service on Sundays and holy days; 2° to be waited upon by a servant, for I heard at Vienna that the members of the Convention who had been delivered up to you, when they had servants, were allowed to see them here all day long, and I flattered myself that the same favour might be granted to me at least for some mo-

ments; 3° I had also asked that MM. de Pusy and de Latour-Maubourg might pass some hours with us, because in the various French prisons where, as you know, I was confined during sixteen months, I had been in the habit of seeing the prisoners communicate with each other. Excuse me, Monsieur le Comte, for having expected so much.

« I acknowledge with the greatest pleasure that we are bound to share all the hardships of M. de Lafayette's captivity, and that that was the only favour we sollicited. Our feelings are not changed, and we all three repeat with all our heart that we are happier with M. de Lafayette, even in this prison, than anywhere else without him. But to justify the liberty I have taken,

I will remind you, Monsieur le Comte, that His Imperial Majesty, in the audience he granted me, had the kindness to tell me *that I should find M. de Lafayette well treated and that, in case I should have any request to make, I should be satisfied with the Commander.*

« I shall also have the honor to remind you that His Majesty had allowed me to write directly to him by addressing my letters to the Prince de Rosemberg. As since we have been confined here, it has been impossible for me to obtain the means of doing so, I thought myself authorized to forward to you my requests, and I beg you will excuse me if you have found them unreasonable. Would you kindly give a thousand tender compliments from me to

Mmes de Windischgratz and d'Ursel? Tell them that my daughters' health, notwithstanding the want of air and exercise, is pretty good. My own is in a bad state, and if the refusal of such simple requests as those I have already made did not disgust me from making fresh ones, I should think it my duty, Monsieur le Comte, to ask for permission and for the necessary passports to go for eight or ten days to Vienna, leaving my daughters with their father, in order to consult on my case doctors who would certainly tell you that such a request is not out of season. If you think it is in your power to give me a favourable answer, I shall be most obliged to you. But, whatever may be the state of my health, I should wish not to have much more alarming anxieties for the

prisoner whom we are so happy to have joined at last.

"Receive, Monsieur le Comte, etc."

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M. DE FERRARIS' ANSWER.

January 26th 1796.

"I am most flattered, Madame la Marquise, that you have been satisfied with my wish to oblige you. I cannot go further in the desire I shall always have to give you proofs of my respect.... Neither the council of war nor myself can grant the requests made by state prisoners. We have no other office than to see that they are watched according to His Imperial Majesty's orders. It is therefore to that Monarch you must address yourself

since he has deigned to give you permission to do so.

"I beg you will receive, Madame la Marquise, etc."

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My mother deeply felt the grief of being unable to alleviate the sufferings of her companions in captivity. But as for herself, no words could express her happiness. You can only imagine it, by remembering what was the ruling passion of her life from the age of fourteen, and how much she had gone through from frequent separations and incessant affairs which had so constantly called my father from his home, as from the great dangers to which he had been exposed. She had passed three horrible years almost

without a hope of ever seeing him again. At last, she possessed that happiness which, during all her life, she had been longing for; each day she beheld the influence of her presence on my father's health, and the solace she afforded him; she was surprised at feeling so happy and reproached herself for being satisfied with her situation while my father was still a prisoner. She was allowed now and then to write, under the eyes of the officer on duty, short unsealed letters to the banker, who remitted the money necessary for our food, and to her sister, Mme de Montagu. During twenty-three months of captivity, she did not write a single line without feeling the utmost vexation at being obliged, in the prisoners' interest, to describe the

painful situation they were in, while her wish would have been to speak only of her own happiness. She was once deeply grieved, when a note was returned which she had attempted to write to my brother on the second page of a letter to her banker. Permission to write to her son was refused, in order that no intelligence from the prison of Olmütz should reach the United States. However she knew by my aunt de Montagu that George was with General Washington.

The privation of the consolations of religion was deeply felt by my mother; but she knew that it was God's hand which had led her into prison and had united the greatest blessing with the accomplishment of the dearest duty. With all the ardour of her faith

and of her love; she joined in spirit with those who were already possessed of eternal bliss. She was impressed with the thought that it was to their intercession she owed all her present happiness. She placed herself under their eyes, she lived with their memory, and wished to retrace for us the recollections of the past. It was with a tooth-pick and a small piece of Indian ink that she wrote my grandmother's life on the margins of the engravings of a volume of Buffon. These scrawls will, I hope, after me, be treasured by her grandchildren.

As might have been expected, my mother's health had suffered much. The sudden passage from the most violent agitations to the most sedentary life, for we had neither air nor

exercise, all contributed to give her an illness which declared itself a few months after our arrival. Never did she show more meritorious submission to my father's wishes, than when she determined to write to the Emperor for permission to go and consult the doctors at Vienna. She only consented to do so in the hopes of being of use to the prisoners[1]. At the end of seven weeks the Commander of Olmütz, who had not yet visited her in prison,

1. Letter to the Emperor :

Olmütz, February 6th 1796

"Sir,

"Had I sooner been given leave to write, I should long since have offered my grateful thanks to Your Imperial Majesty for having permitted us to share the captivity of one so dear. To these thanks, Sir, I shall add no details on M. de Lafayette's condition, however different it may be from what I imagined on leaving Your Majesty's presence; to my

came to intimate a verbal refusal to leave it, unless she gave up all hopes of returning. He asked at the same time for a written answer. It was soon made.

April, 4th 1796.

"The Commander of Olmütz having declared to me that, on my request to go for a week to Vienna in order to consult the doctors, His Imperial Majesty does not permit me, under any pretence whatever to go to

great regret, I shall only speak of myself. My health, impaired by sufferings and misfortunes, my duty towards those who are still left to me in this world, constrain me to solicit permission to go for some days to Vienna, leaving my daughters with their father, in order to consult doctors on my state. I should not have importuned Your Majesty with this request, had I not been told that it could only be granted by Yourself.

"I entreat, etc."

Vienna, and only allows me to leave this prison on condition never to enter it again; I have the honor here to renew my answer. It was my duty towards my family and friends to try and obtain the advice necessary for my health, but they well know that I cannot accept the conditions offered to me. I cannot forget that while we were both on the eve of perishing, I through the tyranny of Robespierre, M. de Lafayette through the physical and moral sufferings of his captivity, I was neither allowed to receive any accounts of him, nor to let him know that his children and I were still alive. I shall not expose myself to the horrors of another separation.

"Therefore, whatever may be the state of my health, or the hardships of

this abode for my daughters, we shall all three take advantage of His Imperial Majesty's goodness in allowing us to share this captivity in all its details.

"NOAILLES LAFAYETTE."

My mother's illness made rapid progress. The doctor was only allowed to see her a moment during the officer's visit. Being ignorant of the French language, he could not understand her, but would express in Latin his fears to my father. She had a violent eruption, first on her arms, which swelled in such a manner that she could neither make use of them nor lift them up, and afterwards on her legs. Fever scarcely ever left her. This state lasted eleven months, from October 1796, till September 1797.

During these eleven months no alleviation of the prison treatment was obtained. She had not even an armchair. Her sufferings did not in the east impair her spirits. Seeing her always serene, always enjoying my father's company and the consolations she had brought with her, we were all less anxious than we ought to have been. This explains how, save in the beginning of the illness, we found pleasure in our quiet life.

My sister supplied the place of outdoor workmen; she even made shoes for my father. But her principal occupation was to write, under his dictation, on the margins of a book. My mother attended to my education, and used to read with me; but the margins of a book, the tooth-picks,

and the bit of Indian ink were things too precious for my use. In the evening, my father used to read aloud to us; I still remember the pleasure of those moments.

A few months after our arrival at Olmütz, some German patriots attempted, notwithstanding the difficulties and the perils of the enterprise, to obtain means of intercourse with my father. One of them, the rector of the University of Olmütz has a right to our deepest gratitude. By his means, some public news reached our ears; he organized a secret correspondence which allowed my mother to communicate with the exterior. A friend carried her letters over the Austrian frontier, and she was thus enabled to receive answers which were not sub-

mitted to the jailor's inspection. In the interior of the prison we had established a correspondence with our companions in captivity. Even before our arrival, my father's secretary could speak to him through the window. By means of a Pan's pipe for which he had arranged a cypher known to M. de Maubourg's servant. But this mode of correspondence, the only one in use for a long time, did not allow of great intercourse. We obtained an easier one with the help of the soldiers whom we bribed by the pleasure of a good meal. Of a night, through our double bars, we used to lower, at the end of a string, a parcel with part of our supper, to the sentry on duty under our windows, who would pass the packet in the same manner to

MM. de Maubourg and de Pusy who occupied separate parts of the prison.

In the month of July 1797, the Marquis de Chasteler, Austrian general, was sent by the Emperor to Olmütz in order to offer their liberty to the prisoners on condition that they would take the engagement of never appearing in his dominions. The day they received this proposal, they heard that the French government, who insisted on their deliverance, had declared at the same time that they could not return to France. Notwithstanding this proof of ill-will, the three friends, who had been allowed to meet a moment in order to concert together on their decision, refused to take any engagement which did not preserve entire the rights of their country on their

persons: this restriction caused the prison doors to be closed on them again.

My mother fully appreciated this noble conduct. In the midst of her sufferings she would willingly have paid with many months of captivity the pleasure caused her by my father's declaration in answer to the proposals made by the Austrian government. Two months elapsed before we received any new communication. At last General Bonaparte and General Clarke, the French plenipotentiaries, required that the prisoners of Olmütz should be delivered without further delay.

Louis Romeuf, formerly aid-de-camp to my father, and who had remained a devoted friend, was sent to Vienna,

from the *armée d'Italie*, to follow up the execution of this condition imperiously demanded. After many difficulties, the order was forwarded to open the gates of the citadel to the prisoners of Olmütz.

We set off for Hamburg on the 19th of September 1797. Five years and one month had elapsed since my father's arrest, and twenty-three months since we had joined him. The prisoners were accompanied as far as Hamburg by an Austrian Major, who followed us most of the way in a separate carriage. We were once able to see, for a moment, the friend who had run such risks to alleviate the sufferings of our captivity. Now and then people tried to approach my father, but the greatest precautions were necessary until we

had crossed the frontiers of the Hereditary States.

But afterwards, particularly at Dresden, Leipsic, Halle, Hamburg, our journey was a prolonged triumph. Crowds thronged to see my father and his companions. The prisoners, who at first had not been able to bear the effects of the open air, were each day gaining strength. But my mother's state of health prevented her from feeling any pleasure in our change. The fatigue of the journey was too great for her. She endeavoured however to take part in the general joy and to respond to the many marks of respect with which she was greeted.

On arriving at Hamburg, where we stopped two days, my father's first

care was to thank M. de Talleyrand[1], and to write the following letter to General Bonaparte:

Hamburg. October 6th 1797.

"*Citoyen Général,*

"The prisoners of Olmütz, happy to owe their deliverance to your irresistible arms, had, during their captivity, rejoiced at the thought that their liberty and their life were attached to the victories of the Republic and to your personal glory. It is with the utmost satisfaction that they now do homage to their liberator. We should have liked, *Citoyen Général*, to have offered to you in person the expression of these feelings, to have witnessed with our own eyes the scenes of so

1. Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

many victories, the army which has won them, and the General who has placed our resurrection amongst the miracles he has accomplished. But you know that the journey to Hamburg has not been left to our choice. It is from the place where we took leave of our jailors that we address our thanks to their victor.

"In the solitary retreat on the Danish territory of Holstein where we shall try to recover our health, we shall unite our patriotic wishes for the Republic with the most lively interest in the illustrious General to whom we are still more attached on account of the services he has rendered to the cause of liberty and to our country, than for the particular obligation we glorify in owing him, and which the deepest

gratitude has for ever engraved in our hearts.

"*Salut et respect,*

"LAFAYETTE, LA TOUR-MAUBOURG,
BUREAUX DE PUSY."

Hamburg was full of French. We found there my father's aid-de-camp with letters from France. We also saw the American consul, the celebrated Klopstock, the generous d'Archenholtz. The Americans held a meeting to vote a most touching address. On all sides we received proofs of interest and of sympathy.

Amongst the letters which most gratified my father, I transcribe the one Mme de Staël addressed to him on hearing of his approaching deliverance[1].

1: The editors have been authorized to publish this letter.

June 20th 1797.

"I hope this letter will reach you. I should like to be one of the first to tell you of the feelings of indignation, grief, hope, fear, anxiety, discouragement, with which your fate has filled, during these last five years, the hearts of all those who love you. I do not know whether it is possible to make these cruel recollections bearable to you; nevertheless I may say that, while calumny was destroying every reputation, while faction, unable to triumph over the cause, was attacking every individual, your misfortunes have preserved your glory, and if your health can be restored to you, you come out whole from a tomb

where your name has acquired fresh lustre. Come directly to France; there is no other country for you. You will find that Republic which your opinions led you to wish for, when your conscience bound you to Royalty. You will find it illustrated by victory, and free from the crimes which stained its origin. You will uphold that Republic because without it no liberty can subsist in France, and because, as a hero and as a martyr, you are so united with freedom that I indifferently pronounce your name and the name of liberty to express what I wish for the honor and welfare of France.

"Come to France; there you will find devoted friends, and let me hope that my constant care for your welfare, and my useless efforts to serve you,

may entitle me to a small place in your thoughts."

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M. Mathieu de Montmorency added:

"It is very bold to write anything after a friend who knows how to express herself with so much eloquence on every subject; but I am so certain of sharing in the deep feeling of interest which has never left her! Besides, when we think of you, we have all but one mind and one heart. This constant thought of your misfortunes and of your courage has survived in me, and will ever survive my aversion from political activity. But I think I should find once more my old enthusiasm to welcome back him who has had such a constant passion for liberty! I am truly grieved at the thought that

I shall be obliged to be absent on business at the time we hope to see you back, but I charge my friends and the excellent bearer of this letter with my best wishes and with the expression of the feelings of which in these lines I give but a feeble idea.

"MATHIEU MY[1]."

At last, on the 10th of October 1797, we arrived at Witmold, a property Mme de Tessé had bought in a peninsula on lake Ploën. Mme de Montagu, who had heard of our arrival, tried in vain to moderate the vehemence of her joy. In order to see us sooner she crossed the lake with M. de

1. The duc Mathieu de Montmorency, member of the Constituent Assembly, "Pair" and minister under the Restoration.

Mun. From my aunt de Tessé we received the most tender reception. She was ever the support and the head of the family.

At Witmold, my mother recovered her strength, and found repose of body and mind. My father found his friends. He was fond of Mme de Tessé, and had with her on every point complete community of opinions. His political life had met with her constant approbation, and you may fancy what charm five years of silence at Olmütz added to Mme de Tessé's lively, animated and *piquante* conversation. My father had also the pleasure of seeing again M. de Mun[1], M. Théodore de

1. The comte de Mun, a friend of the family, and father of the Marquis de Mun, who died "Pair de France."

Lameth, his aid-de-camp, and all the Maubourgs. Mme de Maisonneuve[1] came to see her brother and joined us at Lhemkulen, a large castle in Holstein, near Witmold, which my father had hired for the winter. Shortly afterwards my brother arrived from Mount Vernon[2]. Under General Washington's paternal care he had become a man. My mother was happy and so were her children.

My sister often met at that time Charles de Latour-Maubourg, the younger brother of my father's friend.

1. Mme de Maisonneuve, sister to M. de Maubourg, the captive of Olmütz, to General Victor de Maubourg, who was Ambassador, Minister of war, and Governor of the *Invalides*, and to Charles de Maubourg who became some months later son-in-law to General Lafayette.

2. General Washington's dwelling.

Anastasie was captivated by his handsome countenance, and the noble feelings he expressed. His extreme laconism was preferable in her eyes to the least word said out of season. A marriage was talked of. On that occasion, things were carried on in such a simple and patriarchal manner, that all the subjects generally reckoned so important in like circumstances were not even mentioned. Charles declared he did not fear poverty though he knew what it was. This wedding, celebrated at Mme de Tessé's at Witmold, was a fresh link between two families whose old friendship had been sealed by misfortune.

My mother was carried by her son and son-in-law to the chapel of Witmold, on the 9th of May 1798. Not-

withstanding her sufferings, she experienced a deep sense of happiness. « When I think, she wrote, of the fearful situation my children were in, a short time ago, when I see them all three about me, and find myself on the point of adopting a fourth child according to my heart, I feel unable to thank God sufficiently. »

The course of my mother's convalescence was disturbed by the imperious necessity of returning to France, where she was summoned by family business. She alone could follow up the affairs of the family, for she alone could return to France, as her name was on none of the lists of proscription, or *suspicion*. Having taken my sister to Holland where she left her in the midst of her new family, she pro-

ceeded with me on her journey to Paris. After a short stay there, and a visit to Mme de Chavaniac in Auvergne, we all met again in the following year (1799) at Vianen, near Utrecht. My father had come there from Holstein, with George. Exiles can fix themselves nowhere. Their only thought is to abandon their momentary home, their only wish, to depart. It was there that my sister gave birth to her first child[1], and that my aunts came to see us.

Mme de Montagu arrived from Wilmold, Mme de Grammont from France: the meeting of the three sisters was full of emotion. My two aunts had not seen each other for eight years. My

1. Célestine de Maubourg, married to the Baron de Brigode who died "Pair de France."

mother was forty, Mme de Montagu thirty-two and Mme de Grammont thirty-one. The education given by my grandmother had created between them the strongest ties, but each had kept her peculiar characteristic. Mme de Montagu wrote in one of her letters: « Adrienne is admirable for her faith, her zeal, her uprightness. Every moment I find in her an example to copy. I am struck more than ever by her enlightened and cultivated mind. She has such a sweet way of listening, I may say that God has given her all that was necessary for the great career which awaited her. »

My aunts remained with us a month. Though my mother had been seriously ill, she was obliged to return to France in the spring, to attend to the

common interests of the family. I accompanied her. We left my father in Holland where he had found an excellent friend, General Van-Ryssel, whose daughter married M. Victor de Maubourg.

France was far from being in a quiet state. During the whole summer the country was greatly agitated. The terrorist party was once more gaining alarming strength. On different points, great advantages had been obtained by the troops of the Coalition. An English army had disembarked at the Helder. Terrified at all that was said in Paris, my mother trembled at the thought of seeing fresh barriers arising between my father and herself. Owing to the good will of the Batavian government, he was allowed to remain

in Holland, notwithstanding General Brune's injunctions to the contrary. But if my father could not depend on the protection of the French armies, what would happen if those of the Coalition marched into Holland, bringing with them the counter-revolution? This was talked of openly in Paris. My mother, in her anxiety, resolved to go to the Directeur Sieyès, then chief of the party opposed to the Jacobins. She told him of the dangers to which my father was exposed, and warned him that if the foreign armies were victorious, he would take refuge on the French territory. Sieyès answered that it would be imprudent for him to return to France, and that he would be safer in the states of the King of Prussia, « Who kept him a prisoner! answered

my mother. M. de Lafayette would prefer, if necessary, a prison in France; but he has more confidence in his fellow-countrymen. »

All was in this alarming uncertainty, when the revolution of the 18th of Brumaire took place, and changed the face of affairs. With that just appreciation of things which never forsook her, my mother at once deemed it necessary that, without loss of time, and without asking anybody's permission, my father should return to France at the very moment when justice was proclaimed. She wished him to return ere time had brought the slightest change, and without any other authorization than the liberal intentions then proclaimed by the new government. She obtained a passport for him under an

assumed name, and M. Alexandre Romeuf, one of his former aid-de-camps, brought it to him. My mother was accustomed to foresee my father's intentions, to judge with marvellous tact what it was best for him to do; she would guess his wishes. He, on his side, had entire confidence in her opinion. Therefore, without any further delay, he started immediately, and arrived in Paris.

The Premier Consul received this news with a very bad grace. He would have wished my father to have remained in Holland and to have solicited, like every body else, permission to enter France. The ministers declared that my father must return to Utrecht, there to wait till his name should be effaced from the list of *émigrés*. Those of

our friends who approached the Premier Consul assured us that nobody dared, for the present, say a word to him on the subject. My mother went to see him and was graciously received. She exposed to General Bonaparte my father's peculiar situation and the effect his return would produce on the mind of every honest patriot. The General was struck with the nobleness, prudence and tact of her language. « I am charmed, Madame, he said, to make your acquaintance; *vous avez beaucoup d'esprit, mais vous n'entendez pas les affaires.* » Nevertheless it was decided that my father should remain openly in France without asking for any permission, and that he should go to the country there to await the legal term of his proscription.

My sister and her husband arrived from Holland. My brother had already joined my father, and we established ourselves first at Fontenay, then at Lagrange, one of my grand-mother's estates, which had fallen to my mother's share when the family property had been divided [1].

One of the objects my father had in view on reentering France, was to facilitate the return of his companions in exile. When their chief was allowed to sojourn in France, the same right could not be refused them. The government was well disposed, but was unwilling to take a measure which

1. Lagrange-Bleneau, department of Seine-et-Marne. Fontenay, in the same department, and forming part of the same estate, belonged for some time to Mme de Montagu.

placed in a special category the officers who had followed my father on the 19th of August 1792. Many difficulties were to be conquered, many steps to be taken. This task was intrusted to my mother. She was obliged to go constantly to Paris in order to plead the cause of those faithful friends. She succeeded; there is not one amongst them, I believe, who does not owe his *radiation* to her personal exertions.

The remainder of this precious life was consecrated to us. Repose would have best suited my father even under Bonaparte's consular magistracy, but under Napoleon's imperial despotism, honor prescribed retirement. The dearest wish of my mother's heart was to lead a private life. If, after so many

fatigues and sufferings, quiet had not been necessary, the possibility of peacefully consecrating herself to the affections which filled her soul, to the one especially which surpassed them all, was the only happiness she could envy. She felt too deeply, too passionately, I may say, the emotions of family life, to wish for any other. Neither the grandeur of her former position, nor even the lustre of her misfortunes, had given birth in her mind to that restless pride which cannot bear to return to a homely life. Though her devoted courage had risen above the greatest trials, still the feelings and easy duties of an obscure destiny would have sufficed to satisfy her heart. Love filled her whole being.

God permitted her to enjoy, during

the last years of her life, greater happiness than she had ever ventured to hope for. Her peace was only troubled by anxieties with regard to my brother, who had entered the army and was wounded at the battle of the Mincio. But his marriage, which took place during the summer of 1802, brought great comfort to her heart; she beheld that union with the liveliest hopes and the deepest satisfaction, and saw, as it were, from the beginning all the happiness your aunt Emilie[1] was bringing with her, in becoming the object of such tender affection for two families. We all went to Chavaniac to share this new joy with our old aunt, whose lo-

1. Émilie de Tracy, daughter to the Comte de Tracy, "Pair de France" and "membre de l'Académie française;" died in 1860.

ving mind had lost none of its faculties. Her trials had neither broken her spirits nor chilled her heart.

During this stay in Auvergne, we saw your father for the first time. Mme. de Montagu had made his acquaintance at Brives, in Limousin. It was she who had given my mother the first idea of our marriage and who brought M. de Lasteyrie[1] to Chavaniac. You may fancy how much he suited my mother's views, for she wished above all to find for each of her daughters a husband who united with religious principles and solid qualities,

1. Louis, Marquis de Lasteyrie du Saillant, born in 1781, died in 1826. He entered the army in 1803, reached the rank of Colonel, and retired in 1819. He married, April 20th 1803, Marie-Antoinette-Virginie de Lafayette, author of this narrative.

every exterior advantage. We returned to Lagrange where M. de Lasteyrie came to see us. But shortly before my marriage, on the 20th of February 1803, my father had a fall and broke his hip bone. It is impossible to describe the tortures he went through during the treatment of his fracture. A new method was employed, but it proved so cruelly painful that, in consequence of this experiment, it was never again resorted to.

It was after our return to Lagrange that my mother received a letter from a priest, saying that he had just discovered the place of interment of the thirteen hundred victims who had been sacrificed during the six last weeks of the reign of Terror, at the "barrière du Trône." The small enclosure

belonged to the Princess of Hohenzollern, whose brother, the Prince of Salm-Kyrbourg, had been buried there. Mme de Montagu and my mother were unable to persuade the Princess to relinquish her rights to this ground, and to consecrate it to the common veneration of the families united by the same losses. But the surrounding field, and the chapel which was still standing, could at least be purchased. My mother and Mme de Montagu made an appeal to the relations of the victims, and the adjoining ground was bought by subscription. It was let, as well as the chapel, to nuns who had dedicated themselves to the perpetual adoration of the Holy-Sacrament. The two sisters were thus the foundresses of that establishment

where we have since so often seen them weeping and praying[1].

My mother's health was greatly impaired, but her natural and simple courage acted as a charm to deceive us. We beheld her always serene and tender, taking the liveliest part in the happiness caused by the birth of her three eldest grand-children. She bore with gentle fortitude the anxieties of which my brother and my husband were the object during the campaigns of 1805

1. The cemetery of Picpus, purchased by the families of the last victims of the reign of Terror executed at the *barrière du Trône* from the 14th of June 1794 (26 Prairial an II) until the 27th of July (9 Thermidor) of the same year, is situated near the old *mur d'octroi*, between the *barrière du Trône* and the *barrière de Saint-Mandé*. The names of the victims are inscribed in the chapel of the convent, in the order and according to the dates of the register of the Conciergerie.

and 1806. She heard with joy of George's good fortune when he saved his general's life at the battle of Eylau. The peace which followed brought on for her a period of unmingled happiness. I shall not attempt to describe it to you. I have scarcely dwelt upon those peaceful years we passed at Lagrange, although, during that whole period, I was my mother's daily companion. But I could only repeat to you that we were happy. At the end of the spring of 1807, it seemed that God had accomplished all my mother's desires in this world. As for myself, I cannot fancy it possible to be happier than I was during the period which elapsed from the peace and my eldest daughter's birth up to the beginning of the fatal malady.

These moments were very short. A few days after the return of my brother and of my husband, on the 22th of August, my mother was taken with violent pains and strong fever. She then entered into a state of suffering and weakness from which she never rallied. On the 11th of October, she heard mass for the last time in the chapel of Lagrange. We took advantage of a favourable moment to convey her to Aulnay, Mme de Tessé's place, at three leagues from Paris. But, as her sufferings increased, we went to Paris and established ourselves in my aunt's house. In one of her most cruel moments, she said to Emilie and to me : *My present state mars your happiness, but it does not diminish mine.*

The disorder attacked her brain in

a most fearful manner. A letter written by my father to M. de Maubourg[1], after our misfortune, will give you the heart rending details of this horrible malady. My mother's delirium was peculiar and entirely in keeping with her character; she was completely absorbed by her affection for those she loved; in her wanderings, she would mistake herself on our situations, never on our characters; she knew us to the last. One day she called my sister to her and said : " Have you an idea of what maternal feeling is? Are you like me? Do you know all its joys? Is there anything sweeter, deeper, stronger? Do you feel like me the want of loving and of being loved? "

1. See page 397.

Her love for God and for my father occupied almost exclusively her last moments. What she was for my father in the midst of this delirium is not to be conceived. The effect his presence produced on her, the choice of the words she used to express her love, with more confidence than she had ever shown before, how, with complete incoherence in her ideas, she followed up interests which, though imaginary, were in keeping with her character and her opinions, the charm with which she spoke to him of God and of religion, all this cannot be expressed by words, and such a delirium could only be hers. "God owed her the reward, M. de Graminont said to my father, of permitting her thus to reveal to you the depth of her tenderness."

In the midst of this delirium she repeated three times over Tobit's prayer, the same she had recited on seeing the town of Olmütz.

We lost her on Christmas night, at twelve o'clock, in the year 1807. It was at the foot of our Saviour's cradle that our sacrifice was accomplished. In the morning she had bestowed her blessing on each of us. Her last words were: "I do not suffer." She also said to us: "May the peace of the Lord be with you!" and to my father: "I am entirely yours. (*Je suis toute à vous.*")

# ON THE DEATH

OF

# MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

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*Letter from M. de Lafayette to M. de Latour-Maubourg.*

January 1808.

I have not yet written to you, my dear friend, from the depth of misery in which I am plunged. You have already heard of the angelic end of that incomparable woman.

I feel I must again speak of it to you. My grieved heart loves to open itself to the most constant, the dearest confident of all its thoughts. As yet you have always found me stronger than circumstances, but now this event is stronger than me. Never shall I recover from it.

"During the thirty-four years of an union in which her tenderness, her goodness, the elevation of her mind, charmed, adorned, honoured my life, I felt myself so used to all that she was to me, that I could not distinguish it from my own existence. She was fourteen, and I was sixteen, when her heart amalgamated itself with every thing that could interest me. I knew I loved her, I knew I needed her, but it is only now that I can distinguish what

is left of me for the remainder of a life which I had thought was to have been entirely devoted to worldly matters. The foreboding of her loss had never crossed my mind before, when, on leaving Chavaniac with George, I received a note from Mme de Tessé, I was struck to the heart. On arriving in Paris after a rapid journey, we found her very ill; there was a slight improvement the next day, which I attributed to the pleasure of seeing us; but soon afterwards her head was affected. She said to Mme de Simiane: "I was going to have a malignant fever, but I shall be well attended to, and shall get the better of it." Unhappily it was not a malignant fever, it was something still worse. One day only Corvisart had great hopes. Our

dear invalid was already beginning to wander, when her confessor came to see her. In the evening, she told me: "If I go to another dwelling, you know how much I shall think of you there. Although I shall leave you with reluctance, the sacrifice of my life would be little, if it could ensure your eternal happiness."

The day she received the sacrament, she was anxious to see me near her. Delirium came on afterwards; you never saw anything so extraordinary and so touching. Imagine, my dear friend, a mind completely disordered, thinking itself in Egypt, in Syria, amongst the events of the reign of Athalie, which Celestine's lessons had left in her imagination, strangely blending every idea that was not from the

heart, in short the most constant delirium, and withal that kindness which always seeks for something pleasing to say. There was also a refinement in the way she expressed herself, a loftiness of thought, which astonished every one. But what was admirable above all, was that tenderness of heart which she was incessantly showing to her six children, to her sister, to her aunt, to M. de Tessé; she thought she was with them at Memphis, for, by a miracle of feeling, her mind was never invariably fixed but where I was concerned. It seemed as if that impression was too deep to be obliterated, was stronger than sickness, stronger than death itself. Life had already fled; feeling, warmth, existence, all had taken refuge in the hand which pres-

sed mine. Perhaps did she love, yield to her affection and her tenderness more completely than if she had had the full possession of her faculties. Do not imagine that the dear angel was alarmed at the thought of a future world. Her religion was all love and confidence; the fear of hell never came near her mind. She did not believe in it for beings good, sincere and virtuous, whatever their opinions might be. "I do not know what will happen at the moment of their death, she would say, but God will enlighten them." However, had her mind been clear, she would have thought of what she called her *péchés*, though she did not believe in any other divine punishment than that of being deprived of the sight of the Supreme

Being. And how often have you heard me joking her about her *aimables hérésies*! Who knows whether the fear of increasing my regret would not have partly restrained the outpouring of her feelings, in the same manner as when, during our married life, her utter unselfishness prevented her from yielding to what was most empassioned in her nature? « There was a period, she said a few months ago, when, after one of your returns from America, I felt myself so forcibly attracted to you, that I thought I should faint every time you came into the room. I was possessed with the fear of annoying you, and tried to moderate my feelings. You can scarcely be dissatisfied with what remains. »

« What gratitude I owe to God, she

would repeat during her illness, that such passionate feelings should have been a duty! How happy I have been! she said the day of her death. 'What a lot to be your wife!'" And when I spoke to her of my tenderness, she answered in a touching tone: "Is it true? Is it indeed true? How good you are! Repeat it again, it does me so much good to hear you. If you do not find yourself sufficiently loved, lay the fault upon God: He has not given me more faculties than that I love you," she said in the midst of her delirium, christianly, humanly, passionately."

When she was pitied for her sufferings, the fear of exaggerating them to herself and to others would come upon her. One day, as I was watching her with a look of pity: "Oh! I

am overpaid, she said, by that kind look."

She often begged of me to remain in the room because my presence calmed her. Sometimes, however, she would ask me to go and attend to my business, and when I answered that I had nothing else to do than to take care of her: "How good you are, she would exclaim with her feeble though *pénétrante* voice, you are too kind, you spoil me, I do not deserve all that; I am too happy."

.... Her delirium was intense. It bore principally on the reign of Athalie, on the family of Jacob in which she liked to persuade herself that I was tenderly beloved, on the contentions of Israël and Judah. "Would it not be strange? she said, if, being your wife, I was

obliged to sacrifice myself for a king."

She was in fear of troubles, of proscriptions, and prepared herself to meet them with the fortitude which characterized her in real dangers. She thought there was to be a persecution against christians and reckoned upon me to protect the oppressed. "It appears to me, she said, that the world is beginning over again; nothing but fresh experiments. Why are not all things going on according to your wishes?" All these thoughts were confused in her head; she believed we were in Egypt and Syria.

We thought once her ravings would cease. "Am I not mad? she exclaimed. Come nearer, tell me if I have lost my reason?" I answered that I should

be very sorry to take all the kind things she had said to me for absurdities. "Have I said anything kind? But I have also said many silly things; have we not acted the tragedy of Athalie? What! I am married to the sincerest of men, and I cannot know the truth. It is still your kindness; you want to spare my head. Do speak; I am resigned to the disgrace of being mad." We succeeded at length in calming her. I told her she was valued and loved. "Ah! she answered, I do not care to be valued, so that I am loved." Another time she said: "Fancy what a state my poor head is in; what an odd thing it is that I cannot remember whether Virginie and M. de Lasteyrie are betrothed or united. Help me to collect my thoughts."

Sometimes we could hear her praying in her bed. She made her daughters read prayers to her. There was something heavenly in the manner she twice repeated Tobit's prayers applicable to her state, the same she had recited to her daughters on seeing the steeples of Olmütz for the first time. I approached her. "It is from the book of Tobit, she said. I sing badly, that is why I recite it." Another time she composed a most beautiful prayer which lasted full an hour. She only once or twice seemed in error about me, persuading herself that I was a fervent Christian. "You are not a Christian," she said one day? And as I did not answer: "Oh! I know what you are, you are a *Fayettiste*. — Do you think me so presumptuous, I ré-

plied? But are you not a little *Fayettiste* yourself? — Oh! yes, she exclaimed, with all my soul; I feel I could die for that sect."

.... One day I was speaking to her of her angelic gentleness. "Yes, she said, God has made me gentle; though my gentleness is not like yours; I have not such high pretensions. You are so strong as well as so gentle; you see things from so high, but I will allow that I am gentle, and you are very good to me. — It is you who are good, I answered, and generous above all. Do you remember my first departure for America? Everybody against me; and you hiding your tears at M. de Ségur's marriage. You tried not to appear in grief for fear of bringing down more blame upon me.

"True, she said, it was rather nice for a child. But how kind of you to remember so far back!"

She spoke very sensibly of her daughters' happiness, of the good and noble character of her sons-in-law. "Nevertheless, I have not been able to make them as happy as I am. It would have required all God's power to have brought about that again." It is not to boast, my dear friend, that I tell you all this, although one might well be proud of it, but I find comfort in repeating to you and to myself how tender and how happy she was.

How happy she would have been this winter! all her children near her, the war finished for George and Louis, the birth of Virginie's child, and, I may add, after an illness which, owing to

our past fears, would have made her doubly dear to us! Had she not to the last, the kindness of thinking of my amusements at Lagrange, of my farm, of all that was of daily interest to me! When I spoke to her of returning home: "Ah!" she said, "that would be too delicious! My God, my God," she exclaimed, "six more poor years of Lagrange!" She wanted to return there with me, and begged of me to start before her. I entreated her to allow me to stay, and asked her to rest a little. She promised to do her best, and as she became calmer, "Well," she said, "remain, wait a little; I shall go quietly to sleep."

The disordered state of her brain did not prevent her having misgivings as to her approaching end. The night which

preceded the last, I heard her saying to her nurse: "Do not leave me, tell me when I am to die." At my approach, her fears subsided; but when I spoke to her of recovery, of returning to Lagrange: "Oh! no, I am going to die. Have you any cause of complaint against me? — For what, my dear? you have always been so good and so loving. — Have I then been a gentle companion to you? — Yes assuredly. — Well then, give me your blessing." On all these last evenings, when she thought I was going to leave her, she would ask me for my blessing.

I spoke to her of the happiness of our union, of my tenderness; she took pleasure in hearing me repeat the assurance of my love. "Promise me, she said, to preserve that affection

for ever; promise me." You may well believe that I promised. "Are you satisfied with your children?" she added. I told her how completely they satisfied me. "They are very good, she said. Support them with all your love for me." Then delirium coming on again: "How do you think they feel with respect to the house of Jacob." I assured her that they entered into all her own feelings. "Ah! she replied, my feelings are very moderate, except those I have for you."

Twice only her excitement became intense. It was then the wanderings of maternal love. One day George, to prevent her speaking too much, had, for several hours, kept away from her room. When he came in again, she evidently thought he had just re-

turned from the army. The wildness of her joy on seeing him made her heart beat in a fearful manner. Another time she fell into an ecstasy of joy at the thought of an anniversary dear to our hearts, of the day when, twenty-eight years before, she had given me George. That anniversary was the day of her death.

"One cannot admire sufficiently the meekness, the patience, the unchanging kindness of that angelic woman during this long and cruel malady. In her delirium, which lasted a whole month, she was always thinking of us and fearing to importune her friends. 'I am very troublesome,' she would often say; 'my children,' she one day added, 'must make up their mind to have a silly mother,

since you are willing to have such a silly wife." But never the slightest sign of impatience nor of ill humour. Even when it was most repugnant to her to drink anything, a word from me or from her children, or, in our absence, the idea that the nurses might be blamed, sufficed to decide her, and, up to the last, each service was acknowledged by a kind word, a motion of the head or of the hand. "Never, the doctor said, have I seen in the course of a long practice, anything to be compared to that adorable disposition and to a delirium so extraordinary. No, never have I seen anything which could give me the idea that human perfection could go so far." A few moments before she breathed her last, she murmured to us that she was not

suffering. "No doubt she does not suffer, exclaimed the nurse; she is an angel."

It was very remarkable to what a degree her wanderings corresponded with the different shades of her affection. When I was concerned, her judgment was always sound. Though placing us all in the most fantastic situations, her mind was never at fault with respect to my principles and feelings. She would exclaim: "Decide, you are leader; it is our happy lot to obey you." One day I was attempting to calm her; she gaily repeated this verse:

"A vos sages conseils, Seigneur, je m'abandonne."

With respect to our children, I speak of all six, whom she always recognised

and welcomed, whom she always spoke to in the kindest and most loving manner, and whose various characters and dispositions ever remained clearly present to her mind; there was still something less lucid in her thoughts than with regard to me. As for her grand-children, she spoke of them several times to me with charming details; but more frequently her ideas were confused with respect to their number, their sex and even to the existence of the two last. She was most affectionate throughout to her sister Mme de Montagu; she frequently inquired from us both how my mother was, fancying we had seen her lately. We shuddered on hearing her calmly say on the morning of her death: «To-day I shall see my mother.»

"Our dear Mme de Tessé, who had been ill during the last weeks, and obliged to keep her room, wished to see her during her sleep. Ah! my friend, in what a state was that poor Mme de Tessé on leaving the room! Her niece, knowing that she was ill, thought in her delirium that she was in a fit state to be carried near her bed. She spoke of M. de Tessé's health (he also was unwell) as if she had been in full possession of her faculties; she told me to go and take care of him. I am sure my uncle is pleased to have us all around him. Is it not troublesome for my aunt, she said one day, to have us all here? — Certainly not, I answered laughing, we are only sixteen in number. — It is true, she added, that my aunt must be as much pleased to

have us, as we are to enjoy her hospitality." The last day she told me: "When you see Mme de Simiane, give her my love." Thus her heart was all life when her poor limbs were already numbed by approaching death.

I have already told you without any particulars that she had received the sacraments. I was present during the ceremony, which was more painful to us than to herself, for she had already taken the sacrament in her bed a short time previously.

The next day, before she became quite speechless, Mme de Montagu and my daughters, fearing that my presence might prevent her from praying at her ease, asked me to leave them. My first impulse was to refuse

their request, however tenderly and timidly made; I had a passionate desire to occupy her thoughts exclusively. However, I repressed my feelings, and gave up my place to her sister. I was scarcely gone, when she called me back. So soon as I got nearer, she again took my hand in hers, saying: "*Je suis toute à vous*". These were her last words.

It has been said that she had often lectured me. That was not her way; she frequently expressed, in the course of her delirium, the idea that she would go to heaven. She told me several times: "This life is short and full of troubles; let us unite in God, and depart together for eternity." She wished us all, and me in particular, the peace of the Lord. Such is the man-

nor in which that dear angel expressed herself during her illness, as well as in the will she had made a few years ago, and which is a model of refinement, of elevation of mind, and of eloquence from the heart.

It seems as if, by dwelling on these details, I was trying to defer that last period, when, on seeing the doctor giving up all hopes of her recovery, and only thinking of prolonging life, we felt that for her there was to be no morrow. Until then we had only appeared before her two or three at a time, but that day, as she seemed to be seeking for us, we saw no harm in admitting all the members of the family, who seated themselves in a semi-cercle before her, so that she could see every one. "What a plea-

sant sight! " she said while looking on us with complacency.

She called for her daughters in turn, and had a charming word for each of them. She gave them each her blessing. I feel confident that she was happy during that morning. And how could the last moments be otherwise than calm for her whose piety, far from being troubled by terrors and scruples, never ceased to be, all the time of her illness, before and during her delirium, all love and gratitude for the blessings, to use her own words, which God had bestowed and was still bestowing on her; for her who, notwithstanding the state of her brain, never lost a single *jouissance* which a heart such as hers could feel? Her delirium even became much less

confused. Instead of asking Mme de Montagu how my mother was, she told her: "I look upon you as having succeeded to her."

No doubt she felt that the last moment was approaching, when, after having told me in so touching a manner: "Have you been happy with me? are you kind enough to love me? well then, give me your blessing;" and when I answered: "You love me also, you will give me your blessing," she gave me hers for the first and last time in a solemn and loving manner. Then her six children, each in turn, kissed her hand and face. She looked at them with inexpressible tenderness. Still more surely had she the idea of her approaching end, when, fearing a convulsion, as I believe, she made me a

sign to step back; and, as I remained near her, she laid my hand on her eyes with a look of tender gratitude, thus giving me to understand what was the last duty she expected from me.

We felt during these hours of gentle agony a struggle between the want of expressing our love, which she enjoyed so much, and the belief that these emotions wore out the little that was left in her of life. I kept in my words with nearly as much care as I repressed my sobs, when the touching expression of her eyes, a few scarcely uttered words, tore from my lips the expression of the feelings with which my heart was bursting. She revived, and found strength to exclaim: "Is it then true! you have loved me.

How happy I am! Kiss me." She raised her poor arms which were almost lifeless with wonderful animation. She passed one round my neck; and drawing my head towards hers, she pressed me to her heart, repeating: "What a blessing! how happy I am to be yours!" Until her right hand became motionless, she carried mine successively to her lips and to her heart. My left hand did not leave hers, and as long as she breathed I could feel that pressure which seemed still to mean: "*Je suis toute à vous.*"

We all surrounded her bed which had been drawn into the middle of the room. She motioned to her sister to sit down by her. Her three daughters were continually applying hot towels to her hands and arms to preserve the

last remnant of warmth. We knelt down, following the slow motion of her breath. There was no appearance of pain, the smile of benevolence was playing upon her lips, my hand was still within hers, and thus this angel of goodness and love breathed her last. We bathed with tears the lifeless remains of that adorable being. I felt myself dragged away by M. de Mun and M. de Tracy, and so bade my last farewell to her and to all happiness on earth....

"On Monday that angelic woman was borne to the spot near which repose her grand-mother, her mother and her sister amongst sixteen hundred other victims....

. . . . . .

We found in her writing book a

letter to me, written in 1785, several injunctions made in 1792, and an official will of 1804. This memorandum, which was only a rough copy, was nevertheless a masterpiece of tenderness, of refinement and of heart-felt eloquence. It speaks of religion with simple and touching sublimity.

I love, my dear friend, to confide to your bosom all these recollections of the past, for what else now remains, save recollections, of that adorable woman to whom I have owed, during thirty-four years, an ever-enduring and unclouded happiness? She was attached to me, I may say, by the most ardent feelings, yet never did I perceive in her the slightest shade of selfishness, of displeasure or of jealousy. If I look back to the days of

our youth, how many unexampled proofs of delicacy and generosity come across my mind! She was associated heart and soul with all my political wishes and opinions, and Mme de Tessé might well say that her devotion was a mixture of the catechism and of the *déclaration des droits*. I must again refer to an expression of her aunt's who said to me yesterday : " I never could have believed that it was possible to be so fanatic of your opinions, and at the same time so devoid of party spirit. "

You know as well as I do all she was and all she did during the Revolution. It is not for having come to Olmütz, as Charles Fox so elegantly expressed it, on the wings of duty and of love, that I mean to praise her now,

it is for having remained in France until she had secured, so far as laid in her power, the material comforts of my aunt and the rights of my creditors; it is for having had the courage to send George to America. What noble imprudence to remain the only woman in France endangered by the name she bore, but who always refused to change it! Each of her petitions and declarations began by these words: *La femme Lafayette*. Indulgent as she was with respect to calumny and party hatred, never did she allow, even at the foot of the scaffold, a reflection upon me to pass without protesting against it. She had prepared herself to speak in that spirit before the tribunal, and we have all seen how good, simple and easy in common life was that lofty-

minded and courageous woman. Her piety was also of a peculiar nature. I may say that during thirty-four years I never once experienced from it the slightest shadow of inconvenience. No affectation in her religious practices, which were always subordinate to my convenience. I have had the satisfaction of seeing the least pious of my friends as well received, as much esteemed, and their virtues as fully acknowledged by her, as if there had been no difference of religious opinions between her and them. Never did she express to me anything but hope, even conviction, that upon mature reflection, with the uprightness of heart she knew I possessed, I should end by being convinced. The recommendations which she has left me are

in the same spirit, entreating me to read, for the love of her, several books which certainly I shall examine again with the most solemn attention. She used to call religion sovereign liberty, to make me appreciate it more, and often repeated to me with pleasure these words of *abbé* Fauchet: "Jesus-Christ, my only master (*Jésus-Christ, mon seul maître*)."

This letter would never come to an end, my dear friend, if I gave way to the feelings which inspire it. I shall only add that that angelic woman has, at least, been surrounded with love and regret well worthy of her.....

"Adieu, my dear friend; with your help I have borne sorrows great and hard to endure, to which the name of misfortune might have been given until

the greatest of all misfortunes had been experienced. But, though absorbed in the deepest grief, though given up to one thought, one devotion not of this world, though still more than ever I feel the want to believe that all does not die with us, I still appreciate the pleasures of friendship; and what a friendship is yours, my dear Maubourg!

"I embrace you in her name, in my own, in the name of all you have been to me, since we have known each other.

"Adieu, my dear friend.

"LAFAYETTE."

# THE PRISONS

OF

# Mme DE LAFAYETTE.

## I

*Official report made by Alphonse Aulagnier, Justice of the peace of Le Puy, "chef-lieu" of the department of Haute-Loire, at the moment of the arrest of Mme and Mlle Lafayette.*

N the year 1792, on the tenth day of the month of September, before twelve, we, Alphonse Aulagnier, Justice of the peace for the "canton" of Le Puy, according to orders transmitted to us yb

M. Roland, *ministre de l'intérieur* and emanating from the Committee of General Safety of the National Assembly, under the date of the 19th day of August, the whole to the effect of securing the persons of Mme Lafayette and of her children, residing for the present in the department of Haute-Loire, and in order to execute the aforesaid orders having, by the means of our *requisition* to the "procureur syndic" of the department, mustered eighty-six national guards, soldiers of the line and "gendarmes," we left Le Puy yesterday evening at half past eleven, and, having reached Chavaniac at about eight o'clock in the morning of this day, we gave orders to invest the castle and village of Chavaniac, and having entered the house with four national guards, and four soldiers of the line, we asked the first individual we met where Mme Lafayette was. He answered that she was in her room, whither having repaired, we found her with a young lady who she told us was her daughter. We then exhibited the orders of which we were bearers: she made no resistance. She even gave immediate orders for the horses to be put to her carriage. We asked to

visit her *secrétaire*. She opened it, and we found in it, as well as on a *bureau* and in two *portefeuilles*, several letters and writings, the greatest part without a signature, which we numbered, and upon which we put our initials and our seals.

After having made the necessary researches, having only found the above mentioned papers, the other *secrétaires*, *bureaux*, etc., being stamped with the seal of the district of Brioude, every thing being ready for the departure, it seeming useless to close the present report for the moment, as Mme Lafayette was present at our operations, and as we had orders to act in her presence and write down her observations, we gave orders for the departure of the detachment and escorted Mme Lafayette, her daughter, Mme de Chavaniac, two maids and three servants; having however previously reminded Mme de Chavaniac that we had no special order concerning her, she expressed the wish not to be separated from Mme de Lafayette, and we complied with her desire. Having asked the ladies if it was indifferent to them to go without stopping to Le Puy or to pass the

night at Fix, they answered that they would act as the detachment would think proper.

Fix, September 10th 1792.

*Signed on the original :*

ALPHONSE AULAGNIER.

"Juge de paix commissaire."

ROME.

"Lieutenant de grenadiers."

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Having started on the 11th from Fix at half past two o'clock in the morning, we proceeded on our journey towards Le Puy, having previously consulted Mme Lafayette as to the place she chose to inhabit at Le Puy. She told us that she desired to be lodged under the safeguard of the municipality, but that she wished also to go previously to the *conseil d'administration* of the department, with powers for us to concert with the *conseil* for the safety of her person. On our arrival at Le Puy, having proceeded to the council-room, where the admi-

nistrators were assembled, we gave Mme Lafayette, according to her wish, permission to read the papers numbered 20, 21, 25 and 35, also an extract of the aforesaid papers, with our signature and seal; and we gave besides to Mme Lafayette, equally on her request, a copy of the papers 21 and 35, to be left at the *administration* of the department, these papers having been likewise signed and sealed by us. Having afterwards asked the aforesaid ladies Lafayette and de Chavaniac if they had any remarks to inscribe on this report, after having it read, Mme Lafayette said : *that she wished, before taking any other step, to proceed to the "directoire" of the department, in order there to express : firstly, her just gratitude for the attentive care shown to her during the journey by M. Aulagnier and the soldiers of the national guard and of the line who accompanied her; secondly, to entreat the members of the "conseil" and in particular the "procureur syndic," to explain by what mistake the orders shown to her by M. Aulagnier bore none of the signs of the "administration" of the department, the only constituted authority which*

*she considered had a right to give her orders at Chavaniac.* To which the *procureur syndic* and more especially M. Aulagnier replied, that the order emanated directly from the minister.

M. Aulagnier, personally intrusted with its execution, had asked, on the previous evening, the "procureur général syndic" for a *réquisition* of the national guard, and General Lestrade for a *réquisition* of the troops of the line to fulfil a secret mission. These precautions having appeared sufficient to the "procureur syndic," Mme Lafayette answered nothing on the subject, and merely said that *having come to place herself under the protection of the law and of the constituted authorities which had a right to her respect, she awaits fresh orders, and will punctually obey them; that if any others are intimated to her by force, she begs permission to protest against their legality before obeying; that however the attentions she had received from M. Aulagnier made her see with great pleasure that M. Aulagnier and the members of the "conseil" intended to accomplish together a mission which seemed common to them, according to M. Roland's orders; that*

*encouraged by the just confidence with which they inspired her, she had taken the liberty of saying that in deferring to transfer her to Paris, they in no manner disobeyed the spirit of those orders: that as long as she remained within the limits of the department, whether they relied on her parole for not crossing them, or secured her person by placing her under the immediate surveyance of a constituted authority, she would in all cases consider herself as a hostage for M. Lafayette, for whom she would ever be proud, to go security, and whose opinions she glories in sharing; that being in no way accused, and having no reason to be so, and her papers being in the hands of the Committee of General Safety, she can furnish no explanation useful to the country; that, in consequence, she can perceive no obstacle to the compliance with her wishes, or at least to these wishes being discussed previous to definitive orders being intimated to her.*

She also asked M. Aulagnier in presence of the "conseil" *to leave her a copy of three letters from M. Lafayette which she deemed important for her to keep, and in particular one of*

*the 21st and another of the 25th of August last, which he had written since his detention in the Low Countries, and which she wished to be able to show on every occasion as a precious proof of his unalterable attachment to all the principles which had hitherto guided him, and of the constancy of those feelings which no misfortune, no injustice can ever efface from his heart.*

M. Aulagnier delivered immediately a copy of the above mentioned letters, after having, as well as the "procureur général syndic," compared, sealed and signed them.

Another sealed letter, bearing the post-mark of Bayeux, and addressed to M. Frestel, was found in Mme Lafayette's *portefeuille*. Having declared that this letter did not concern her, she begged the commissary to send it back to its address without breaking the seal.

We thought that we could not in honor refuse to comply with this last request, and having affixed our seal to the said letter, we put it into the hands of the "procureur syndic" to be delivered up by him on the first injunction from the minister, not having thought fit to

take on our responsibility the sending of it back to its author.

After which, having made a packet of all these papers, sealed with three seals of the Justice of the peace of the canton of Le Puy, we delivered them up to the "procureur syndic" who took them under his charge, and we closed the present report at Le Puy on the twelfth day of September 1794, *l'an IV. de la liberté;* and have signed :

MARIE-ADRIENNE-FRANÇOISE NOAILLES LAFAYETTE.

ALPHONSE AULAGNIER,

"Juge de paix."

ROME,

Lieutenant de grenadiers, commanding the detachment.

*A true copy of the original which is in my hands.*

ALPHONSE AULAGNIER.

## II

*Letter from the "Ministre de l'intérieur" Roland to Alphonse Aulagnier, Justice of the peace at Le Puy, department of Haute-Loire.*

Paris, September 2nd 1792, "an IV de la liberté et le Ier de l'égalité."

I SEND you, Sir, the order which was transmitted to me, on the 19th of August last, by the Committee of General Safety of the National Assembly, to effect the arrest of M. Lafayette's wife, and to send her under good and safe guard with her children; if they are found with her, to a prison in the city of Paris. I expect from your patriotism and your zeal that you

will have this order executed with all possible celerity at Chavaniac, near Le Puy, where that lady is residing at present. I authorize you to call upon the public force for this arrest, and, after the execution of this order, you will concert with the "administration" of the department for the safe conveyance of the prisoners. You will moreover punctually obey the orders of the Committee of General Safety, and you will let me know immediately what you have done.

You see, Sir, the importance of the mission with which you are intrusted. I hope I shall receive a favourable account of the result of your proceedings.

The "ministre de l'intérieur,"

ROLAND.

*A true copy of the original which is in my hands.*

ALPHONSE AULAGNIER.

# III

*Order of the Committee of General Safety of the National Assembly, dated August 19th 1792.*

The public force is called upon to effect the arrest of the wife of M. Lafayette, *ci-devant* General in chief of the army of the North, in any place she may be found, and to bring her, under good and safe escort, with her children, if they are found with her, to a prison of the city of Paris, charging expressly the bearer of this letter to seize all the papers belonging to the *dame* Lafayette, and to carry them sealed to the Committee.

Done at the Committee of General Safety of the

National Assembly. Paris, August 19th 1792, *l'an IV de la liberté.*

*Signed :*

LOMOND BERNARD, *President*, Robin DESSOYANT, Claude FAUCHET, RUDLER, BAZIRE, *secretary of the Committee*, VARDON, MUSSET, INGRANDE, BORDA, ROVÈRE, GRANGENEUVE, François CHABOT, RUAMPS.

*Certified a true copy of the original which is in my hands. Paris, August 20th.*

"Le ministre de l'intérieur,"

ROLAND.

With a seal in red wax bearing the arms of France, and under the scutcheon :

"DÉPARTEMENT DE L'INTÉRIEUR."

*A true copy of the original which is in my hands.*

ALPHONSE AULAGNIER.

# IV

*Letter written to the minister Roland, by Aulagnier.*

Le Puy, September 12th 1792.

"MONSEIGNEUR,

I HAVE punctually executed the delicate mission Your Excellency honoured me with, in consequence of the orders transmitted to him by the Committee of General Safety of the National Assembly.

The daughter and wife of General Lafayette were arrested on the 10th instant at Chavaniac, their place of residence, and they were

immediately transferred to Le Puy with Mme de Chavaniac, who wished to follow them, and to share their fate. They requested me to take them to the house where the administrations of the department and of the district hold their sittings. I did not think I was called upon to refuse their request.

I have the honor to transmit to Your Excellency an extract from the official report which I drew up. With regard to their immediate translation to Paris, I did not think it my duty to follow strictly the orders of the Committee of General Safety, the events of the 2nd and 3rd of September showing sufficiently the lot which might await my illustrious prisoners. Besides the roads from Le Puy to Chavaniac are covered with *fédérés marseillais*, *provençaux* or *languedociens*, who have become completely unmanageable, and as I would not suffer the slightest insult to be offered to persons intrusted to my care and placed under the protection of the law, in exposing their safety, I should also expose your authority and the authority of the Committee of General Safety.

All took place with calm and decency, and

I succeeded in obtaining due respect for misfortune. My situation is very difficult. I am waiting with impatience for further orders from Your Excellency, and hope soon to be relieved from so heavy a responsibility.

It is with the deepest respect that, etc.

ALPHONSE AULAGNIER.

## V

*The "ministre de l'intérieur" to M. Aulagnier, Justice of the peace at Le Puy.*

Paris, September 28th 1792.

Sir,

I CAN neither praise nor blame your conduct in the complete non-execution of the orders I transmitted to you for the translation of the persons of Mme Lafayette and of her daughter to Paris, because it proves once more to me the straightforwardness of your feelings and the goodness of your heart. But you have taken upon yourself a very heavy responsibility in these difficult times.

The "conseil exécutif provisoire" authorizes

you to transfer Mme Lafayette and her family to Chavaniac where you will place her under the *surveyance* of the local authorities for whom you will stand responsible.

Receive, etc.

ROLAND.

# VI

*Official report on the treatment of M. de Lafayette, M. de Latour-Maubourg, M. Bureaux de Pusy, detained as State prisoners in the fortress of Olmütz, of Mme de Lafayette, of her daughters, and of their servants.*

The Major General Marquis de Chasteler, His Majesty's Chamberlain, Knight of the military order of Maria Theresa, Vice-Quarter-Master General of His Majesty the Emperor and King, after having spoken separately to each of the prisoners on the nature of their treatment, assembled them in M. de Lafayette's room, on the twenty-sixth of July, seventeen hundred and

ninety seven, at seven o'clock in the morning, where, in presence of Captain Mac-Elligot of the "regiment de Ligne," he drew up the present report.

LODGINGS.

M. de Lafayette, M. de Latour-Maubourg, M. Bureaux de Pusy, as well as Mme de Lafayette and her daughters, whom His Majesty the Emperor allowed on their request to join M. de Lafayette, and their servants, are detained at Olmütz, in the building behind the barracks of the convent of the *ci-devant* jesuits The rooms are on the ground floor, they command a view on a high rampart, and look to the south. Each room has a window four feet wide and eight feet high, closed by a double grating which does not prevent the prisoners having a very extensive view on the works of the place. The top of the window is shut by means of a padlock, the lower part can be left open for the circulation of air.

The greatest disadvantage of these lodgings is a sewer which runs through the moat of the fortress, and the vicinity of the *latrines* which

gives a bad smell at every change of the atmosphere.

M. de Lafayette inhabits a vaulted room twenty four feet long, fifteen wide, and twelve high. He has another room of the same size which serves as an anti-chamber, and which communicates with the former. He has a stove, a bed belonging to himself, a table, chairs, and a chest of drawers.

MM. de Latour-Maubourg and Bureaux de Pusy have each a room with the same furniture.

Mme de Lafayette and her two daughters inhabit the same room. The young ladies sleep in the same bed notwithstanding reiterated complaints, especially during the illness of one of them, to obtain separate beds.

The servants of MM. de Lafayette, Latour-Maubourg and Bureaux de Pusy have rooms like their masters, only they have but a bed and one chair.

BOARD.

The prisoners have been fed in the following manner: In the morning, coffee or chocolate, according to their choice. At dinner, soup, boiled beef, a *ragoût* or vegetables, roast meat, salade, desert and a bottle of red Hungarian wine. Their supper consisted of roast meat, salade and half a bottle of wine. This food was in sufficient quantity, but the dishes were frequently very dirty.

CONDITION OF THE SERVANTS AND ATTENDANCE.

The prisoners are attended upon by soldiers. Their servants see them in the following manner: M. de Maubourg's servant has seen his master every day for three hours. M. Bureaux de Pusy's servant was separated from his master during six weeks. But during the last twenty-one months he has seen him for three hours every day. M. de Lafayette, since his attempt at evasion, is attended upon, as well as his family, by soldiers, his servants having had no communication with him since that moment.

TREATMENT IN CASES OF ILLNESS.

In cases of illness, the military surgeon of the fortress has visited the prisoners as often as necessary, and they were given all the medicaments which could be administered to them in their room.

TREATMENT FROM THE OFFICERS ON GUARD.

M. Jacob, "lieutenant de place," and after him M. Germack, "major de la place," were specially employed in guarding them, but for the last eight months this duty has been performed by M. Mac-Elligot, captain of the "regiment de Ligne." The prisoners are fully satisfied with the manner in which they have been treated by M. Mac-Elligot, and with the attentions which they have received from him.

TREATMENT FROM THE COMMANDERS OF OLMUTZ.

Le Lieutenant General de Spleni, whilst he commanded at Olmütz, frequently came to see

them, and they say that it is impossible to fulfil a disagreeable mission with more politeness.

With regard to His Excellency General de Schrœder, he only visited the prisoners two or three times on special business.

Olmütz, July 26th 1797.

*A true copy of the original.*

J. G. MARQUIS DE CHASTELER.

THE END.

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